

In Scipio's Gardens
and Other Poems *by*
Samuel Valentine Cole

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In Scipio's Gardens and Other Poems

By
Samuel Valentine Cole



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SAMUEL VALENTINE COLE

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ECHOES FROM ROMAN VOICES

MINE and not mine the songs I utter here :
Mine was the harp ; I held it to the winds
That down a score of silent centuries
Blow, filling all the spaces of the world.
Not mine the breath that touched it into sound —
Although so feebly ; for the strings are few
And small, and all the instrument is rough,
Nor holds a thousandth of the melody
That drives against it — no, not mine, but theirs,
Who, undiscerned but roaming all the winds,
And scattering the sweet echoes of themselves,
Gave me the theme, in which the music lies,
Wrapping it round with music of their own ;
Whom I had loved since first my heart could feel
The love of beauty and aspiring thought
That center round their stately Roman names.

OLD FRIENDS

OLD as the centuries reaching back to Rome.
I call them friends because in my still hours
They speak their heart out, give me of their best,
And make appeal to what is best in me,
Scorning the tricks made common in our day,
And holding their high levels of theme and thought
In spite of all down-dragging earthliness,
These friends whose faces I have never seen.

Therefore, as one who walks the lowland ways,
While rock and stream are wrapped in morning mist,
Pauses, perchance, to hear a pleasant voice
Singing somewhere above him on the hills,
And wonders of the song and of the voice,
Till his imagination all alive
Bestows on them a figure and a face,—
Shepherd, or farmer-lad, or milking-maid,
Or some lone traveler passing through the land,—
So I, in dealing with these unseen friends,
By such poor pencilings have tried to catch
Their faces from the voices and the songs.

I

LUCRETIVS

One sang the grand beginnings, — the wild storm
Of atoms and the gathering of the worlds ;
He sang the children of the teeming earth,
And love, the mother of all life ; the sense
Of being thrilled him ; it was good to be,
To look upon the light, and feel the sun,
And tremble with the rhythm of the world.

And truth was good ; he loved it, not as one
Who clung to husks of what no more was truth,
But as a searcher bold to push his thought
Beyond convention's boundary after light.

He mixed his soul with nature,— with the trees,
The flowering meads, the splendor of the stars,
The splash of waves and moanings of the wind ;
Yet found therein no heart like his heart, warm
With human sympathies ; nature was cold,
And chance played havoc with men's hopes and lives,
What time the gods, who neither knew nor cared,
Basked somewhere in the sunshine far away,
And laughed, and feasted, till their day should come.

And life became to him a little thing,
A gleam — only to show how inky-black

The flood — a flower, a note or two of song,
A ripple of air, a very little thing,
Not worth the pain of it, this little life,
And then an end where all is as it was.

For in his system ruinous seeds were hid :
One deep engulfing Shadow, wherein aught
Of light or life is smitten at a touch,
And slain, and falls to nothing evermore,
Lay stretched far off, wide-mouthed, immovable,
Across the troubled pathway of the Whole,
An unrelenting, universal grave.
The power of it wrought on him ; as a bird,
Spying a serpent, feels the dreadful charm,
And silent grows, and inch by inch is drawn
A helpless victim to its doom, so he,
Letting his strength ooze from him, face to face
With that great shadow of Doubt and Death, brake off,
Midway the music of it, all his song,
And slipped into the blackness of the void.

But yet his voice goes singing through the world,
And in it the truth-seeking soul of man.

II

VERGIL

Another, one of the anointed few
Who, down the ages, bear the sacred torch

Delivered out of heaven, to be passed
In due succession on from hand to hand,
Growing and shining on the paths of men,
Till, the vast circle of the years complete,
It comes again into the hand of God,—
This other, in the interval between
Great Homer and the glorious Florentine,
Builted his dream of mingled fate and faith,
Now swaying toward the dreary pagan doubt,
Now, by prophetic vision or mere chance,
Toward the dear Hope so soon to light the world.

From that dividing isthmus of his times
He heard—and with a quicker ear than most—
Two oceans murmuring,—storm and stress behind,
Peace and the harmonies of peace before.
And more and more the old storm died away,
And more and more the better music grew,
And more and more his creed for evils ran :
“The God will also make an end of these.”
For in his face came momentary gleams
As from some far off unborn Age of Gold,
And momentary rustlings, here and there,
In all he wrote, as from some Golden Branch—
Sweet alien voices prophesying good.

Men felt his power and marveled ; after, called
Him wizard ; for they saw not all he saw,—

The Powers that overthrow to build again
Ever at work—Greek, Trojan, what were they?—
He saw the oak-tree in the ruined seed,
In falling Troy the rising walls of Rome,
And felt the glory of the incomplete,
And held communings with heroic souls
Who yet would live on earth and build and rule.

He wrought as those who seek beyond all else,
In what they do, the fairest, farthest goal,—
Perfection absolute,—nor pause content
With relative achievement : noble souls,
Who keep their eyes upon the glimmering light,
And catch the distant murmur of a time,
And live, and make the glory of the world.

One of the noblest ; for, in such an age,
He strove to grasp the skirts of his ideal,
Receding still and crying back to him
To follow, follow, and he followed on,
Delaying not for pleasure, or mere ease,
Or power, or gold, but, mindful of the voice
And of his kinship with all noble ends,
In such an age he followed as he could
Along the path touched by the flying feet
Of that which vanishes from point to point,
And draws men after it from light to light ;
And, following thus, made manifest himself

As one who could not ever greatly care
For aught below the perfect and the best ;
Until, with all his tears for mortal things,
And all his sympathy for human kind,
And all his yearning for the farther shore,
He passed, as blameless as a star, and left
One more imperishable name on earth.

III

CICERO

The third—with tongue to pierce the living hearts
Of many men for treason's overthrow
And for the lifting up of the oppressed,
Itself by Fulvia's bodkin to be pierced—
Launched forth, a man of action, on the tide
Which seethed and roared, and bore him to his goal,
The shining plains of immortality,
But swept the mighty City to her doom.

No singer he, with all that voice of power,
And all that vision and rhythm in his soul ;
No singer, yet the lover of true song,
Of true nobility, of all things true,
Of friends and books and nature ; grand old man
And patriot, to the last despairing not
Of the Republic, although marking well
The heavy shadow settling heavier down.

He longed for better things ; he built his home
Amid the quiet chambers of the hills,
O'erlooking Rome, the city of his heart,
And saw, as those who neither sleep nor wake,—
By glimpses, faintly, and as in a dream,—
Another City, loftier than his own,
And more enduring, and of nobler men.
For, through a secret window in his life,
Opened away from this world's noise and wrong,
The music of the skies crept ever in,
And evermore streamed into it the light,
Flashed through the shadow earthward, from the
throne

Of Him whose dwelling overtops the stars,—
Maker of Worlds and Lord of Human Souls.

THE SONG OF SILENUS ; OR, THE MAKING OF
THE WORLD

I

WHAT old reveler, what monster, riding hither
on an ass,
Bald, and fat, and red of visage ? Say, you, shall we
let him pass ?

He is drunken, he is swinging by the handle his can-
teen, —
Hist ! it is the god Silenus ! Quick to cover, or be
seen !

Wait till from his ass he tumbles on the greensward,
and erelong
We shall have him at our mercy, we shall win from
him a song.

For he is not half the dullard that he seems, with his
queer ways ;
We it is that are the dullards, if we hear and do not
praise.

He will sing, if so his mood is, sweetly as a great god
can ;

If he chooses, he will charm you with the seven pipes
of Pan.

Twist a chain of flowers and follow, softly through
the shadows creep,

Till beside some rock or fountain you shall find him
fast asleep.

II

So we gathered long-stemmed lilies, bluebells from
their rocky shelf,

Roses blooming first that morning, each a little morn
itself ;

And the flowers the name still bearing which Apollo's
favorite bore,

With the syllable of sorrow marked upon them ever-
more.

Then a potent chain we twisted, and, to please him
unaware,

Wrought a crown of tender vine-leaves, since the old
man's head was bare.

And within the hour we held him in the charmèd,
flowery knot,

While we shouted, Ho ! Silenus ! till he owned that
he was caught ;

Till the reeds that by the river once in voiceless
shadows grew,
And are now a power on earth, he lifted to his lips
and blew.

Loud and mirthful, weird and solemn, low and tender,
came the strain ;
Pausing oft, he changed the measure, blew, and
paused, then blew again.

And amid the many pauses, as if from the leaves he
twirled,
He retold the famous story of the making of the
world.

Wind and tree forgot their murmur, and the noisy
brook its tongue,
While he mingled truth and legend in his music, for
he sung :

III

“ Mark you how the bright Aurora through the golden
gateway steals,
And the Night as swiftly follows on her silent-run-
ning wheels ?

“ Mark you how the constellations roll through
heaven’s arch by night,
All the noiseless alternations of the darkness and the
light ?

“Have you marked the change of seasons, and the
tides that rise and fall,
And the wind that ever varies, and the law that runs
through all ?

“How one thing another follows, and not very far
away :
After waking comes the slumber ; after life and growth,
decay ?

“Know that through the mighty framework of the
universe a soul,
All-pervading, all-foreseeing, lives and regulates the
whole.

“Know that as in æons perished all from a begin-
ning rose,
So in æons uncreated waits for all a final close.

IV

“Once there were no lands or waters, and no glorious
rolling air,
And no sunlight breaking earthward, and no starlight
anywhere :

“Only nothingness, an ocean that extended more
and more,
With its billows that were silence and that broke
upon no shore ;

“ And the many-figured atoms, rough, and smooth,
and round, and square,
Falling in the void in silence, just as snow-flakes in
the air,

“ Till a single atom, shaken by an unknown impulse,
swerves,
Sends its thrill through all the others, crossing paral-
lels with curves.

“ Round, in ever narrowing circles, were the nebulous
masses whirled ;
Centered in the inmost spiral lay the seed that is the
world.

V

“ There in mist it lay and hardened slowly to a
granite core,
Whereon dropped the ceaseless atoms as on the
eternal floor.

“ Afterwards, the heaven, pressing with its mighty
hemisphere,
Rose, the thinner from the denser, like a bubble,
crystal-clear ;

“ And the luminous globular wonders, — one by day,
and one by night,
Floating in the liquid ether. And the world was
filled with light.

“Next, the boundless flood of waters outward from
the center rolled,

Wrapped the earth, o’er all its surface, in a blue and
trembling fold ;

“Till the hollows were created, and adown the
mountain steeps

Fell the waves to roar forever in their dark and lonely
deeps.

VI

“Fell the waves and rose the mountains, and the
windy reach of shore,

Wading outward, far and farther beat away the foam
and roar.

“Streaming clouds began to gather, balls of fire to
flame and fly,

And the elemental tempest shook the great frame of
the sky.

“Land and water were at warfare, earth and air were
racked with pains ;

Earth was furrowed into valleys, pounded here and
there to plains.

VII

“Then the land was filled with beauty, all its un-
dulating sweep

Silver-threaded with the waters flashing backward to
the deep ;

“ Belted o’er with shining forests that began to drink
the breeze,
Fanning silence into music with their millions of great
trees.

“ Came and went the gorgeous seasons, sang the
breezes, sang the brook ;
Passed the grand primeval splendors, with no human
eye to look !

“ By the river-marge the ripples fondled with the
tuneless reeds ;
On the ground, for countless ages, trees in silence
dropped their seeds.

“ Inland from the distant ocean rolled the murmur of
his lips,
While as yet he wrecked no navies, felt the burden of
no ships.

“ Oh, the mighty preparation for the lord that was
to be !
Oh, the waiting of the forest! oh, the solemn, solemn
sea !

VIII

“ First, the noisy waves were peopled, and a race of
monsters seen,
Dying in their generations, and an æon passed
between.

“To the air came flying reptiles,—came and went,
and left their bones,
Which to those who read the ages are as letters in the
stones.

“To the hills came walking creatures, of a less re-
pulsive mien ;
But they died, as died the others, and an æon passed
between.

“Thus the forms of being followed in succession
slow, each race
Somewhat fairer than the former and more perfect in
its place.

“Last of all her many children which the common
parent bore,
Man appeared, a god in figure, lord of all her bound-
less store.”

IX

Mute we sat ; the skilled Silenus filled our ears with
heaven's tide,
As he sang the great creation and a thousand things
beside,—
Sang the interstellar spaces where the blest immortals
dwell
In a sacred calm together, while the world goes ill or
well ;

Where they bask in pleasant sunshine, counting not
the days or years,
And the sound of human sorrow never finds their
blessed ears ;

And the mystery of the mountains, and the wonder
of the sea,
And the power of floods and earthquakes, all the
changes that would be :

How the race of men would perish, when our mother
Earth no more
Can sustain the teeming millions that must feed upon
her store ;

How the sun would slowly darken to a cinder till
destroyed,
And with all his burnt-out planets still keep falling
down the void ;

How the sky would fall in ruins, and the earth into
decay,
With the dead sun dropping downward like a pebble
thrown away ;

And at last how every atom would resume its
separate form,
Through the gulfs of darkness falling, just as in the
primal storm.

X

So he sang till on the water melted evening's golden
bar,
Till the fire died on the hilltops, sang until the even-
ing star,

Till we saw the silent Archer climb his zenith-winding
stair,
And across the northern heavens stream the dark
Egyptian's hair.

Then he paused as if to listen, half in earnest, half in
fun,—
But he grasped his empty wine-bag, and the old man's
song was done.

XI

Slowly homeward as we carried in our hearts a new
delight,
Much we mused upon the story, much upon the seer,
that night,—

How the ugliest of bodies may contain the keenest
soul,
As the richest wine may sparkle in a very common
bowl.

And the wind that journeyed with us shook the dew-
drops on the grass,
While we heard far down the valley some one shout-
ing for his ass.

THE BEES OF ARISTÆUS

I

O H, the simple age of Saturn, golden period of
peace,

In the land that like a mother saw her sons and joys
increase !

Summers of the stormless heaven, summers of the
windless sea,

Linked together by as little of the winter as could be ;

Fountains singing in the covert or asleep like liquid
glass,

And no poison in the flowers, and no serpent in the
grass ;

Meads of unlaborious tillage, seas without the toiling
oars ;

Magic ships of cloud and sunshine dropped all treasures
on all shores ;

And no iron-handed terror smiting at the hearts of
men ;

Justice blindfold ruled the people, War lay chained
within his den.

Nor were gods ashamed to mingle in the mart or home
and join

Speech with speech, the words they uttered falling like
new-minted coin.

As a blameless star through heaven rolled the happy
planet then,

In the simple age of Saturn that will never be again.

Rose her sister-world in autumn, warm and golden,
large and low,

Hung above the mellow harvest, cheered the reapers
in the row.

Rose the stars in silent order, watching from their
heavenly march,

And with eyes of benediction glided down the mighty
arch.

II

Woe to shepherd Aristæus! Wrong had somehow
entered in ;

Spirits in the purple twilight passed where kindlier
ones had been ;

Left a blight upon the meadows and destruction on
the hives ;

Flower and herb began to wither, bees forsook their
gentle lives,—

Fiery souls from little bodies sundered flew away afar,
Every soul, as saith the poet, to its place within a star.

Woe to shepherd Aristæus ! Much he felt the heavy
change,
Mourned his dead bees and the causes so calamitous
and strange,

Till he stood one rosy morning near the sacred foun-
tain-source
Whence the king of rolling rivers sweeps on his
majestic course.

III

Lovelier than all the valleys ever crossed by sun or
moon
Lies the vale where loud Peneus fills the silence of
the noon,

As he drives to wider regions far away his leaping
waves,
Shepherd of a thousand waters gathered from a thou-
sand caves.

Upward till the eye is weary slope the sides ; from
hill to hill
Climb the forests ; far in heaven you may see them
waving still,—

Green seas ever stayed from falling, down whose
billowy ridges dart
Shafts of dawn that search but never find the valley's
inmost heart.

Noonday there is mellow twilight; beauty, unobserved
of men,
Wakes a little from her slumber and returns to it again.

IV

Here the loud-voiced Aristæus shook the echoes from
their sleep :

“Thou that dwellest, O my mother, in the river's
utmost deep,

“Hear me, if thou art my mother, as thy lips have often
said ;

Blight has settled on my meadows, all my golden bees
are dead.”

She, within her crystal chamber hollowed underneath
the foam,

Heard a sound like human sorrow enter her immortal
home.

While she listened, and her maidens started as with
sudden fear,

Lo, the wail of Aristæus smote again his mother's
ear :

“Thou hast called me an immortal, dowered me with
endless years ;
Take thy boon, the years are bitter, I have found them
full of tears.”

Through the tumult of the waters like an arrow to her
soul
Came the cry, and fair Cyrene bade the streams asunder
roll.

Straightway the obedient river arched into a mighty
fold,
Let the young man enter dryshod over stones and sands
of gold ;

Showed him mysteries and wonders, the results of
Titan force ;
On his way he heard the waters roaring at the central
source,

Heard the sunken caves reëcho, saw the floods before
their birth,
Saw Eridanus and Tiber, all the rivers of the earth.

On he passed in much amazement ; when he reached
the stately hall,
Rosy faces bade him welcome, Queen Cyrene first of
all.

V

Face to face with Aristæus she divined his secret
heart

And at once with silent gesture bade the others stand
apart.

Then she spoke with deep compassion and some
wingèd words of blame :

“Well I know thy hidden trouble, how it eats thee
like a flame.

“Son, remember ; for I saw thee by the river’s pebbly
shore,

When thy heart was bent on evil—saw the one who
fled before,

“How the unaccustomed serpent smote her from the
greening blades,

And her sweet and guileless spirit went below the
gloomy shades.

“Thou wert guilty. Thracian Orpheus—none could
blow a sweeter breath—

Mourned his bride, and followed, living, down into the
realm of death,

“Piped until she heard the music faintly creeping on
the night,

Till she followed, for he drew her, strove to draw her
back to light.

“ But he broke the hard condition under love's more
potent spell —

Error that might be forgiven, were forgiveness known
to hell —

“ Then her steps began to falter, sleep to shroud her
swimming eyes,

And a second time she vanished like a smoke in dark-
ened skies.

“ Thrice, in token all was ended, thrice across the
gloomy flood

Rolled the melancholy thunder, thrice a terror chilled
the blood.

“ Empty was his heart forever ; sorrow filled, then
stilled, the song

Of the sweetest of all singers ; thou hadst done him
grievous wrong.

“ But the gods, the lords of justice, watching over all
events,

Send their spirits in the twilight with the even recom-
pense.

“ They have found thee, Aristæus, fostering the serpent
sin ;

Thou hast wrought with it a mischief ; still the poison
lurks within.

“Proteus alone can help thee ; find and bind him ;
make him tell ;
Do not mind the looks and struggling of the prophet.
Fare thee well.”

So they parted, son and mother. He was far upon
his path
When the flame fell from Olympus and the stars rose
from their bath.

VI

Proteus, with team of fishes, circled round and round
the bay ;
All the morn his wheels were flashing in their furrows
far away.

But, when he had come to slumber in his cave's un-
guarded tent,
Half the flaming circle of the sun already spent,

Aristæus stole upon him with the bonds that none
may break —
Who can break his bonds when pity holds one for an-
other's sake ? —

Much the monster writhed and twisted, all his direful
shapes became,
Now a serpent, now a whirlwind, now he columned
into flame.

But in vain ; the tear was stronger than the strength
of any god,
And at last the seer grew patient and was ruled as by
a nod.

VII

“Ah !” he said, “I see the causes ; nothing ever
comes of naught ;
Link by link the chain has lengthened, but the first
link was a thought.

“Know that sin lies in the motive, and, though silent,
soon or late
Reaches down into the future the resistless hand of
fate ;

“Though forgot it works its errand ; from the little
seed it bears,
Springs an unintended harvest ; then it finds thee un-
awares.

“Son, remember ; I beheld thee by the river’s pebbly
shore ;
All the silent eyes of heaven know thy guilt for ever-
more.

“And the gods, the lords of justice, watching over hu-
man lives,
Sent their spirits in the twilight ; these have wrought
against thy hives.

“These have wrought, the rest will follow ; evil
grows from more to more ;
Slowly grind the mills of heaven, but they grind one
to the core.

“Lo, if thou wouldst be forgiven, if in any comfort
live,
Slay the evil thou hast fostered ; haply may the gods
forgive.

“Thrice three oxen of the fairest that in all thy pas-
tures graze,
Sacrifice before thy altars, leave their bodies thrice
three days.”

Proteus abruptly ending plunged away beneath the
foam ;

Wrapped in doubt, yet vaguely hoping, Aristæus
journeyed home,

Chose the fairest of his oxen, slew and left them on
the ground

Near his altars, then departed till the days should roll
around.

VIII

When the ninth unsullied morning shot its splendor
through the pines,

Drew the veils that robed the meadows, stirred the
nests amid the vines,

Came the shepherd Aristæus with an anxious heart to
find

If his sin had been forgiven and the gods again were
kind.

Lo, the miracle that happened ! As he listened, far
away

Something like a faint susurrus rose upon the breeze
that day.

Soon he recognized the buzzing of innumerable wings,
Saw the air alive and flashing with a host of tiny
things.

Forth from every slaughtered victim poured a separate
stream of bees,

Trailed away on airy courses with a sound like rip-
pling seas.

Many miles the line extended, for it seemed to have
no end,

Swarm on swarm its numbers adding till the shades
began to blend.

Then the mighty clusters hanging from the branches
touched the ground,

Filled the night's ambrosial silence with a glad con-
tinual sound.

On the morrow, as aforetime, over mead and wood
and wold

Went and came the busy thousands singing with their
loads of gold.

IN SCIPIO'S GARDENS

*HARK! the fitful wind is veering; let us pause,
or change the tone,
Till a little loftier music through the trembling
strings is blown.*

*For I hear the trees that rustle near the Tiber's lordly
roll,
And I hear the men beneath them talking of the
deathless soul,—*

*Piso, Lælius, and the hero wearing his adopted name
With the double glory round it, Africanus dear to
fame.*

LÆLIUS

Much do I admire the statues that diffuse their silent
grace
Through thy gardens, but I wonder, missing one
familiar face.

AFRICANUS

Whose, pray?

LÆLIUS

His whose name will flourish when a
host of others fall,
Withered leaves, from off the branches of the Tree
that shades us all,—
Tree of Rome's imperial greatness ; his will feel not
the control
Of the winds from dark oblivion, as the endless
seasons roll.

AFRICANUS

'T is Nasica whom thou meanest ?

LÆLIUS

Thou hast said it ;
even thou
Must acknowledge he is worthy of the laurel on his
brow.

AFRICANUS

True, as yet he hath no statue ; not in what our eyes
may see
Or our hands may handle, Lælius, have we shrined
his memory.
But the need is less, it may be, since he played so
grand a part ;
Fame does not reside in statues, glory is not all from
art.

Bronze will tarnish, marble crumble, both will perish
at the touch

Of the hand of the destroyer ; there are better things
than such.

What though, hewn by mighty chisels, Athos
changed his bulk of stone

Into Alexander's features, and from his ærial zone

Gazed with stony eyes forever over island, wave, and
fleet ;

Gazed on by the pigmy nations sailing underneath his
feet,—

Would that bear the conqueror's glory farther down
the living age

Than the frail though magic figures breathing from
the written page ?

Other hands are vain to help thee win thy name a
length of days ;

Better is thine own achievement than a thousand
gusts of praise.

Better far the unseen statue, living in the hearts of
men,

Than the forms of dust that crumble and return to
dust again.

What saith Ennius, our poet ? “ Build no monuments,
nor give
Tears for me or lamentation : on the lips of men I
live.”

LÆLIUS

Ay, but statues have their uses ; if the man be truly
great,
Then his image stands a pillar in the fabric of the
State.

Freedom rests some hope upon it ; treason fears the
noble dead
When they throng the Forum living in their images
instead.

Nothing cold and nothing speechless is a statue, as it
stands
In the eyes of all our children, as if beckoning with
its hands :

“ Come up hither ; for your country spare no labor,
pain, or scars ;
Over deeds like mine, Quirites, lies the pathway to
the stars.”

PISO

Lælius hath it, Africanus ; he is right and both are
right ;
What is in us stirs and thrills us, oftentimes, at the out-
ward sight.

All our great ones, all our worthiest—be their lives and
names our care

To remember, cherish, honor, though themselves
dwell elsewhere.

Such, methinks, are twice immortal—with the gods
in heaven, and then

In their deeds on earth forever working out the good
of men.

LÆLIUS

Would we might, O Africanus, now we touch the
lofty theme,

Hear from thy own lips the story of the marvels of thy
dream,

When, in Masinissa's palace, seemed the aged king to
see

His great-hearted Africanus living once again in thee.

AFRICANUS

Yes, as fire that long has smoldered, suddenly may
burst to flame,

So his friendship for the hero at the mention of my
name.

For the kind old man received me, loved me, for the
name I bore ;

Asked with tears of Africanus, talked of him and noth-
ing more,

Every sentence "Africanus," "Africanus," till it seemed
All the world was Africanus ; and that very night I
dreamed.

PISO

Let us hear it.

LÆLIUS

Tell it to us.

AFRICANUS

What, am I so hardly pressed ?
But there's more in dreams, believe me, than this
world has ever guessed.

Dreams forerun the slow tomorrows — silent-footed
heralds they,
Bearing in their face the image of the things upon the
way.

Long we talked ; and, when we ended, in the dim
uncertain light
Looked I forth upon the beauty and the boundlessness
of night.

But my thoughts were on dear faces seen no more
this world around,
And my heart was full of yearning as the sea was full
of sound.

What of Paulus? Africanus? Could the eternal heavens
and sea

For the blessed dead make answer— what they are
and where they be ?

Soft the night ; the world was glorious, all its wheels
were running well ;

When the spacious earth fell from me, narrowing,
dwindling, as it fell —

With its frozen poles, its deserts, all its zones of
flowers and trees,

All its mountains distance-flattened to the flat and
shining seas —

Fell and lay within the shadow, far, and far, and far
away,

Seeming now as nothing larger than the ball we toss
at play ;

All its armies, pomps, ambitions, vanished as if they
were not,

And our Roman Empire on it showing only like a
dot !

I was standing, full of wonder, where each hour new
wonder brings,

On the threshold of the glory and the magnitude of
things.

Splendid was the threshold, splendid all that azure
airy floor,
Blinding splendor all around me, all above me, all before ;

For the stars that seem as pin-points in the canopy of
night,
Now looked near, and large, and awful ; they were
ocean-worlds of light.

Then a low strange music, having somewhere in that
realm its birth,
With such harmony and sweetness as are never known
on earth,

Crept upon me, louder, sweeter, filled my unaccus-
tomed ears,
For I heard the solemn turning of the stately mighty
spheres,

Saturn, Jove, and all the others, sphere in sphere ; I
heard them roll,
And the outmost self-moved God-sphere moving,
steading the whole.

While I stood amazed and fearing, lo, a mist as white
as wool,
Interfused with splendor, like a star's, and wonderful,

Seemed to gather, drifting toward me, till my keener
sight could trace
Cloudlike flowing folds of raiment ; in the cloud a
living face—

Dared I think it ?—Africanus ! 't was his very self I
saw
Clothed in his immortal toga, and he filled my soul
with awe.

But he spake with voice like music : “O my name-
sake, do not fear :
Evil clings to earth, but evil never thrives or enters
here.

“All good speech and all good action which have ever
blessed thy earth,
All good souls, where'er they wander, in this region
had their birth,—

“Home of those who felled the forest, slew the beast,
and sailed the brine,
Lived, and strove, and toiled, and suffered for that
little world of thine :

“Warriors, statesmen, sages, poets—all who know,
and love, and do ;
And the good great Master Workman dwells among
them, working too.

“He it is that knows them, loves them, sends them
thither in His plan
For the building up of nations and the betterment of
man,

“Giving them to do, not always just the thing they
seek and ask,
But the thing that yields the service ; He Himself
assigns the task.

“Men are dear to God, but never are so dear and near
as when
For the love of it they render service to their fellow
men.

“And His true ones and His faithful self-denying ones
He calls,
When the special task is over, back to these immortal
halls.

“And they come into His presence, not to rest, but still
to do,
Still to take the boon He gives them and with joy be-
gin anew.

“For it is their joy forever just to serve and to obey,
Here or wheresoe’er He chooses,—no mere sunshine-
baskers they !

“What on thy poor earth thou namest chance or fate,
we understand

Is the Master and His workers shaping things with
skillful hand ;

“For this is the glorious temple, where the free clear-
visioned soul

Sees no longer things in fragments, but may contem-
plate the whole.”

Thus he spake ; my eyes kept wandering downward
ever toward the spot

Where the little earth lay swimming in the shadow
unforgot,

With the home and friends and places I in heaven still
dared to love,

When a voice went by me whispering, “Look not
down, but look above.”

Then I lifted up my vision, and, behold, the very
air

Seemed alive with forms and faces all about me
everywhere,—

Faces I had seen in statues ; and, in many a shining
row,

Others I had merely read of, others still I did not
know.

Suddenly one coming toward me filled my heart anew
with fears—

Lo, 't was Paulus, my dear father, and my eyes o'er-
flowed with tears.

“O my son,” said noble Paulus, “in the beauty
round thee spread

Some are living, as thou seest, whom the world
considers dead.

“Those who cherish uncontaminate what was given
them at the start,—

That pure spark of soul struck outward from the great
God's life and heart,

“That which in them warms them, thrills them, and
impels them toward the sky —

Reverence, justice, love of country — such, my son,
will never die.

“For the frail and feeble body is not thou ; the soul is
thou ;

Know, then, that thou art immortal, if thou truly
livest now.

“Thinking, loving, seeking, doing — this belongs not
to the clod,

This is of the soul and makes thee sharer in the life of
God.

“ And as fire released flies upward to its fountain in
the sun,
So the soul to God its author when the little task is
done.”

Thus he spoke ; I made no answer, for my tears were
falling fast ;
But he added, quickly seeing how my mind was on
the past :

“ To and fro on silent hinges move the gates of day
and night,
Letting out and in the darkness ; in and out, the glo-
rious light.

“ Round and round and round in heaven roll the ever-
lasting spheres ;
To and fro and round forever on thy earth the days
and years.

“ Onward march the generations through the ages ; to
and fro,
Round and round, or ever onward, all things in their
seasons go.

“ But the soul that seeks not greatly what the world
may take or give,
Lives, though in it yet above it, as the eternal God doth
live.

“Conflagrations, floods, and earthquakes, wrecks and
ruins of time and space —
O'er them all, in all their changes, lifts the soul her
starlike face.”

Then again spake Africanus : “Thou wilt not forget
the claim
Civic duty lays upon thee — thee, the bearer of my
name.

“Men have need of one another in their stations great
or small ;
'T is on earth a truth of heaven — all for each and each
for all.

“Just to take what others toiled for, suffered for, and
never bring
Thought or service back to others — citizen, 't were a
shameless thing !

“And the God, whose purpose marches steadily
through the future's gates,
Holds for it in special favor those great brotherhoods
called States.

“Men who help to shape the counsels, wielding
power of ax and rod,
Must be strong and wise and noble, as the ministers
of God.

“Love thy country ; she deserves it ; God requires it ;
shield her cause ;

Build her up in gentler manners, purer justice, nobler
laws ;

“Build her up in peerless honor and in all that makes a
state

Safe in framework and foundation, and a loyal people
great.

“Lo, the fateful hour approaches, like a dragging cloud
at sea,

When thy poor distracted country will for refuge turn
to thee.

“Art thou able ? Art thou worthy ? Hast thou will to
dare and do ?

Canst thou drop self-love behind thee and to truth
alone be true ?

“Thou must stand, thy country's bulwark, while
the storm goes roaring past,—

Thou, though others fail, stand faithful and undaunted
to the last.

“Take into thy heart the secret learned by every
man of might :

Victory is as sure as God is, when the man and cause
are right.

“There are Powers that work in silence with the
hero's arm and soul,
And they work for righteous issues, and they never
miss their goal.

“Less it matters how the troubles of the present grow
or spend ;
Man's supreme concern and question is — What lieth
at the end ?

“Stand, then, to thy work and purpose, dare with
circumstance to cope,
And believe the heavenly secret, and forever cling to
hope.”

Here he paused, then vaguely pointing westward with
his shining hand,
Added slowly words that haunt me, although strange
to understand :

“For there lives far down the future, where no eye
on earth can see,
That which crowns the *Is* and *Has Been* with the
glory of *To Be*.

“Rome and Carthage, if they saw it, would no longer
be at strife ;
States would learn how each contributes to the world's
completer life.

“More and more must all the nations, fitted to an
ampler plan,
Merge their interests in the nobler final brotherhood of
man.”

So he ceased. Then noble Paulus said in accents
deeply drawn :

“Take, my son, a father’s counsel for thy great hour
coming on.

“It is coming, I behold it ; thou must have thy trial
too ;

Thou wilt also have thy triumph, if thou to thyself art
true.

“Do not be as those whose purpose topples over at a
breath ;

Guard the grand old Roman virtue steadfastness unto
the death.

“Let them blame thee, scorn thee, mock thee ; mind
them not, for talk they will ;

Mind thy purpose and thy motive ; do thy work, and
be thou still.

“Oh, for still strong men of action everywhere and
evermore,

Who will neither swerve nor falter when the hostile
voices roar!

“Lords o’er circumstance, and servants of their conscience — noble men,
Destined to be welcomed some day in these shining halls again.

“See to it the common prizes do not make thee pause or turn ;
Keep thine eyes straightforward always where the larger splendors burn.

“Care not overmuch for glory and the greatness of a name ;
Mark on thy small earth how narrow run the boundaries of fame ;

“For the longest age is only as a drop let fall, and whirled
Down the depths of that wild ocean streaming endless round the world.

“What is fame that seems so mighty ? ’T is a little puff of air,
Scarce a breath ; the winds absorb it, bear it no man knoweth where.

“But, my son, there is a glory thou canst aim for and be wise ;
Scorn it not—the only glory ever reaching to the skies.

“Learn the greatest of achievements — simple duty
simply done ;
And the greatest glory — goodness ; by these twain
the heights are won.

“Lo, they move the gates of morning in thy world !
A little spell
Thou must find thy duty yonder ; I have told thee ;
now farewell.”

He withdrew, and very softly all the stately vision
broke
Like a beautiful cloud and vanished ; in the palace I
awoke.

LÆLIUS

Splendid vision ! It must haunt thee in whate'er thy
hands will do.

PISO

Glorious hope ! O Africanus, thinkest thou the
vision true ?

AFRICANUS

Yea, I hold that what is noblest and arouses all our
powers
With immortal longings for it, some day, somewhere,
must be ours.

If we cling to past achievement or to present time and
place,

Life runs backward, slowly dying ; fades the light
upon our face.

But if we respect the vision, follow it, and follow
still,

And with steadfastness of purpose, then we gain the
end we will.

On all other paths of effort circumstance may set its
bars,

Stop us, thwart us, but, oh, never on the pathway to
the stars.

What we take as our ideals grow to be our masters
dumb ;

In the stillness they will mold us ; like themselves we
must become.

Not the good thing we accomplish, but the better
thing we plan,

Not achievement but ideal, is the measure of a man.

And the good God will not judge us merely as the
men we are,

But by what we love and strive for He will judge us—
clod or star.

For what draws us, seeming over all things else supremely fair,

Is our truer self discovered living and eternal there.

And our dreams are sent from heaven for the present's golden spur.

Ask you, is the soul immortal? Let us live as if it were.

Thus they talked, and thus they ended, and the long calm summer day

In a bed of golden ashes sank, and burned, and died away.

Gone the speakers, gone the Gardens, Rome's imperial greatness gone ;

But the same old solemn question in the world is living on.

CORYDON TO THYRSIS

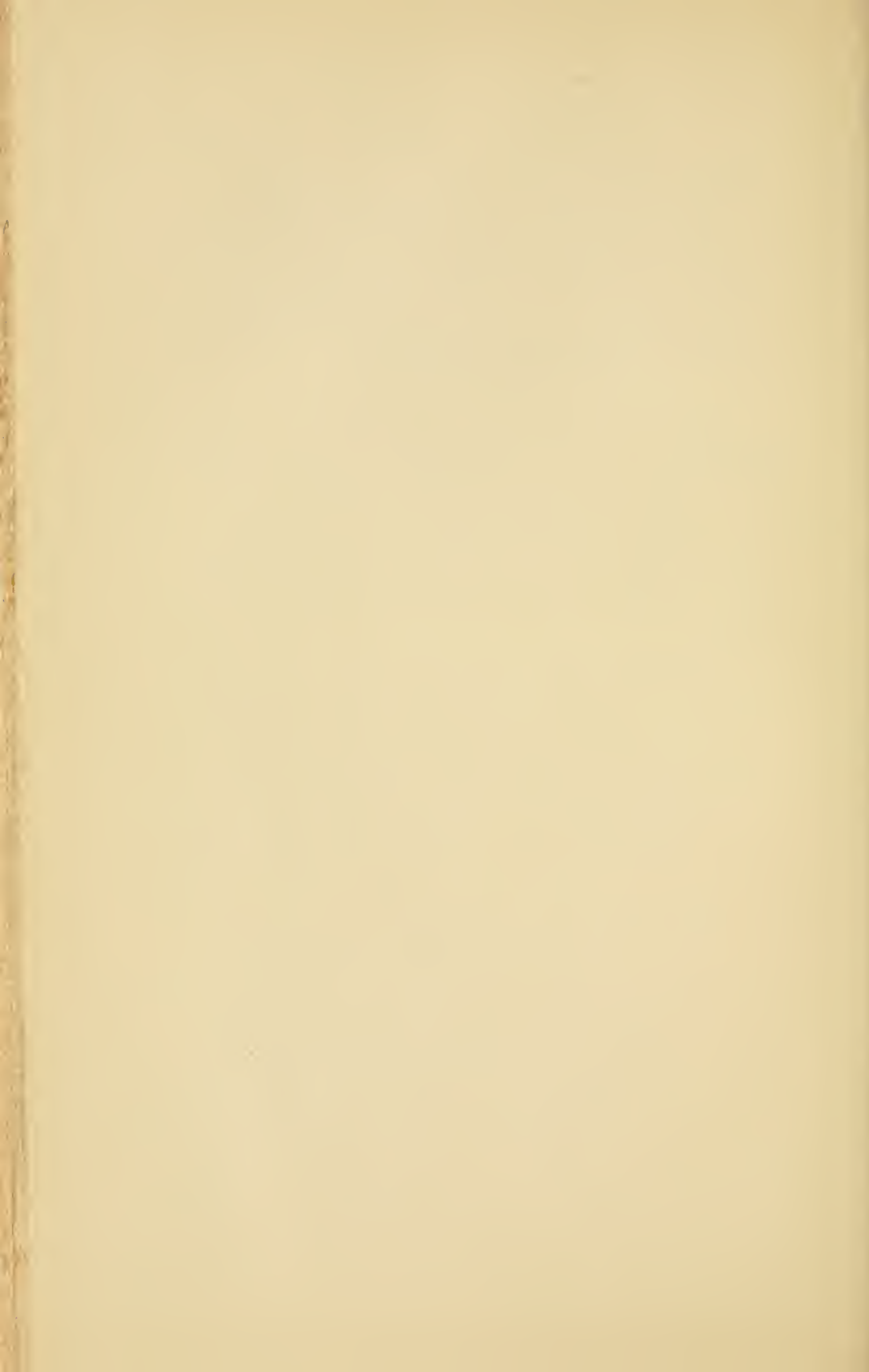
ASK me no more ! The tree less idly waits
For last year's bird than thou for song of mine.

Yet when the evening reddens into wine
Our little stream and dies beyond the gates,
When the soft voices in the pines are come,
I feel my heart stir, but my lips are dumb.

For I have heard the master ! `Wise, indeed,
Had I in silence been content to hear,
Nor idly striven, when he was not near,
To draw so grand a music through my reed.
Fool that I was ! I tried to mould his song
For old Damætas, who has loved me long.

As well one leaf might voice the rustling hill,
Or glowworm hold the splendor of a star,
As my poor oat straw trill a single bar !
It merely mocked his infinite sweet skill,—
It mocked his skill, and did a woful thing
For me, because I can no longer sing.

Look ! the cool air is rolling on the plain
A thicker shadow, and clear Hesper shines
Where Mænalus is musical with pines.
This was the hour in which I heard the strain.
Wait till *he* comes ; then thou thyself wilt see,
And never after ask a song of me.



AL FRESCO

THE FAR BLUE HILLS

I LIFT my eyes and ye are ever there,
 Wrapped in the folds of the imperial air,
And crowned with gold of morn or evening rare,
 O far blue hills.

Around you break the lights of heaven all,
There rolls away the Titan's splendid ball,
And there the circling suns of midnight fall,
 O far blue hills.

Wild bursts the hurricane o'er lake and land,
Loud roars the cloud and smites with blazing brand ;
They pass, and silence comes, and there ye stand,
 O far blue hills.

Your spirit fills the wide horizon round
And lays on all things here its peace profound,
Till I forget that I am of the ground,
 O far blue hills,—

Forget the earth to which I loved to cling,
And soar away as on an eagle's wing,
To be with you a calm and steadfast thing,
 O far blue hills ;

While small the care that seemed so great before,
Faint as the breeze that fans your ledges o'er ;
Yea, 't is the passing shadow and no more,
O far blue hills.

ENDYMION

HOW slowly falls yon sickle from on high
Through evening's silent sky,
Flashing a splendor from its curvèd blade
On the low-lying shade !

Now in and out the narrow cloud that bars
Its pathway from the stars
It slips, and with a golden glory shines,
Nearing the mountain lines.

Nay, 't is no sickle which some unseen hand
Lets fall upon the land ;
It is the jewel of a lady's crown,
As she steps lightly down.

Night after night, down the aërial stair
She stealeth unaware,
Leaving the empire which she rules above,
And all her state, for love.

Behold, her feet have touched the rocky steeps
Where the young shepherd sleeps,

And larger burns her jewel as she moves
In search of him she loves.

And now it fades, and glimmers, and is gone.
Happy Endymion !
While here the world in sudden shadow lies,
She bends above his eyes.

A SPRING NOTE

LISTEN ! her great heart is beating, once again you
hear it warm and strong ;
Through her veins of blue the waters, seaward-drawn,
full-flooded, bound along.

Tongues are in the brooks, and voices in the winds
are set like fairy flutes ;
Trees and vines and herbs are quickened, life has long
been stirring at the roots.

Now upon our mountain altars earlier comes and
longer burns the flame ;
Sweet-voiced strangers throng the valleys, putting all
the poets' songs to shame.

Far and wide o'er stream and woodland flings the
shower its crystal treasures rare,
Iris, robed in light, descending on her jeweled ladder in
the air.

Roll the silver constellations through an ocean-world
of milder blue ;
In the night aërial spirits fill the new-made flower-
cups with dew.

Mother Earth, I may not ask thee all the mystery I seek
to know,

Listening upon thy bosom to the Force that lives and
works below ;

But with this bright dome above me, these sweet
sounds of life returning here,

Well I know thy heart beats ever, though mine feebler
beats from year to year.

THE TREES

Gensque virum truncis et duro robore nata.—*Æneid* viii., 315.

THERE 'S something in a noble tree —
What shall I say? a soul?
For 't is not form, or aught we see
In leaf, or branch, or bole.
Some presence, though not understood,
Dwells there always, and seems
To be acquainted with our mood,
And mingles in our dreams.

I would not say that trees at all
Were of our blood and race,
Yet, lingering where their shadows fall,
I sometimes think I trace
A kinship, whose far-reaching root
Grew when the world began,
And made them best of all things mute
To be the friends of man.

Held down by whatsoever might
Unto an earthly sod,
They stretch forth arms for air and light
As we do after God ;
And when in all their boughs the breeze
Moans loud, or softly sings,
As our own hearts in us, the trees
Are almost human things.

What wonder in the days that burned
With old poetic dream,
Dead Phaëthon's fair sisters turned
To poplars by the stream !
In many a light cotillion stept
The trees when fluters blew ;
And many a tear, 't is said, they wept
For human sorrow too.

Mute, said I? They are seldom thus ;
They whisper each to each,
And each and all of them to us,
In varied forms of speech.
"Be serious," the solemn pine
Is saying overhead ;
"Be beautiful," the elm-tree fine
Has always finely said ;

“Be quick to feel,” the aspen still
Repeats the whole day long ;
While, from the green slope of the hill,
The oak-tree adds, “Be strong.”
When with my burden, as I hear
Their distant voices call,
I rise, and listen, and draw near,
“Be patient,” say they all.

VACATION

THE Spirit of Life has wrought upon the world
The old-time miracle ; none knoweth how :
Green fields, the banners of the wood unfurled,
The flash of wings across the smiling moors,
The piled-up cumuli where heaven soars
All beautiful ever : — it is summer now,
And I am free in God's great out-of-doors !

In the warm grasses as one lies alone,
And hears the message which the low wind brings —
Unsyllabled, indeed, but not unknown —
His very being seems to ebb and spend,
And somehow in the great world-rhythm blend, —
Those deep pulsations from the heart of things
That throb, and throb, and throb, and make no end.

All things are mine ; to all things I belong ;
I mingle in them — heeding bounds nor bars —
Float in the cloud, melt in the river's song ;
In the clear wave from rock to rock I leap,
Widen away, and slowly onward creep ;

I stretch forth glimmering hands beneath the stars,
And lose my little murmur in the deep.

Yea, more than that ; whatever I behold —
Dark forest, mountain, the o'erarching wheel
Of heaven's solemn turning, all the old
Immeasurable air and boundless sea —
Yields of its life, builds life and strength in me
For tasks to come, while I but see and feel,
And merely am, and it is joy to be.

For that small spark within us is not blind
To its beginning ; struck from one vast Soul
Which, in the frame-work of the world, doth bind
All parts together ; small, but still agreeing
With That which moulded us without our seeing :
Since God is all, and all in all — the Whole,
In whom we live, and move, and have our being.

“THE WHITE WORLDS RISE, THE WHITE
WORLDS SINK”

THE white worlds rise, the white worlds sink,
And the tides they come and go ;
All blank and dead the sky o’erhead,
And the beach lies bare below.

The white worlds sink, the white worlds rise,
And the tides they go and come ;
The sky bends bright o’er waves at night
On shores no longer dumb.

The wild wind blows ; it can not blow
The white worlds from their track ;
The storm roars far, but can not bar
The tides from coming back.

To all the worlds, to all the tides,
That none may say them nay,
An unseen Power hath set the hour
And all things give it way.

O chance, O change, O life, O death,
I fear not what will be ;
The Power that guides the stars and tides
Will make my path for me.

“GO, READ IN THE BOOK OF THE HILLS”

GO, read in the Book of the Hills the tale of a
dateless past,

And read in the Book of the Stars the story of all that
is vast.

Behind, before, around, they bear an unending sway,
These Angels of Time and Space — oh, terrible Angels
they !

If thus we stand appalled in the presence of Time and
Space,

And marvel at what they do, and tremble to look in
their face,

What must it seem to behold, however dim and far,
The face of the King Himself — His face whose serv-
ants they are !

ORION

THREE jewels, flaming in his belt,
Beat back the ancient shade,
And, marching up the height, he looms
A giant unafraid.

Wear three in thine,—faith, hope, and love,—
And thou art armed right well :
All powers must yield to their charmed might
In heaven or earth or hell.

THROUGH THE TELESCOPE

A GULF in the sky beyond the outermost, faintest
mark

Of star-dust, a mammoth gulf illumined by never a
spark,

Where thousands of systems like ours might roll
around in the dark —

The very dark of dark, in spite of the light that runs
Streaming along its marge from the splendor of dying
suns,

And in spite of the light that spreads like the threads
of wind-blown hair

For leagues, that out-million the millions, across the
abysm there,

And in spite of the myriad worlds that, borne upon
gleaming tides,

Have tumbled, ruining, down the terrible slope of its
sides.

So dark, and the dark of dark, so deep, and the deep
of deep,

Where never a sound doth stir, and never a life-throb
creep.

The Pit of the Universe is it? the wild and bottomless
grave

For the things that God in His mercy has vainly en-
deavored to save?

Where all the things that are useless, and all that love
decay,

And all things evil, are thrown forever and ever away?

Or is it the vast Outside, so void of the things that
are,

That, bearing aloft not even the candle of one pale
star,

Our God Himself has ventured never as yet so far?

PRO PATRIA

ON THE RETURN OF THE FRIGATE
“ CONSTITUTION ”

1897

I

BRING her home to her rest,
For her work is done ;
And north and south and east and west
Let the sound of her glorious welcome run.

This is the vessel that sailed away
A hundred years ago ;
And this is the vessel, as all men know,
That, ship for ship and man for man,
Since the hour her great career began,
Found never an equal in her day.

The sea and the untamed powers of air
Might smite against her and smite her bare,
And the terrible war-voice round her roar —
God knows how they roared, how they smote
and tore

This child of 'ninety-seven !

If she fled, it was only to win the fight ;
If she stayed, God pity her foeman's plight !
Whatever the task the brave deemed right,
She flinched not once, but held her face
Full-front to the danger, and kept her place,
And ever she kept the stars she bore
Close to the stars of heaven.

And this is the vessel
That dared to wrestle,
In one wild hour,
With the many-handed giant Power
That kept the gates and held the keys,
Locking, unlocking, to those or these,
The great world-waterways near and far ;
That marshaled a thousand ships of war
And was lord upon all the seas !
Amid the silence of men oppressed
She burst as a voice from out the West,
And, by the awful speech she hurled,
Shook the wide deep, and shook the land,
And shook the thrones of the kings of the world,
Because she spoke of the might of right,
And spoke to them all of the growing light,
In a way they could hear and understand !
She dared with the daring of those who die
In noble endeavor, and that is why,

Through smoke and flame and battle-roar
And all that iron death could do,
She ploughed her steadfast way so true,
And never dropped the stars she bore,
But always in place, near the stars of the sky,
The banner of her country blew !

II

Constitution — ominous name !
Written so large on time's hoar walls,
And written in letters of blood and flame,
And written to stand, whatever befalls,
For God hath written it. And today
The old is weighed ; it must pass away.

Weighed and wanting. Break it afar,
Break it to Kaiser and Sultan and Czar,
What God hath purposed to make men free.
The long, long-during wrongs that are
Must yield to the rights that are to be,
Till the world, and the world in its wideness then,
Is owned and governed by common men.

Oh, speed the time when the old will fall,
When the new will rise and the old be done,
When the million no more need serve the one
Except as the one is servant of all !

Honor the vessel for her deeds and fame,
 Honor the deeds that touch cold hearts to flame,
 Honor the fame that lives and ever will,
 Honor the vessel that through good or ill
 Wrought only honor for her borrowed name.

III

Break, silent morning, break and glow,
 Wreath all the pleasant world in smiles ;
 Wake, gentle breezes, wake and blow
 Along the murmuring ocean aisles ;
 Let waiting sails be touched, and fill,
 And find the haven of their will.

The Dome and the Monument—sentinels they,
 Watching the Puritan city and bay,
 And the streaming seas and the far away—
 Behold the silver thread of her track,
 And hear men ask, "Is she coming back?"
 The Old North Church, where the lanterns hung,
 The Old South Church, where the voices rung,
 Signal across to the Monument gray,
 And whisper it up to the Golden Dome,
 "Oh yes, at last she is coming home ;
 And we were here when she sailed away."

And all the great and silent few,
 That link the old things with the new,

Talk through the morning, each to each,
Of the larger matters of long ago,
And say, in a semi-alien speech,
Which only the dead in its fulness know :
"She that fought for us,
She that wrought for us,
Fought for us, wrought for us all, so well,
She shall come back to us,
She shall be one of us,
Here shall she dwell,
Here, in her home and ours, and tell
Of the right that will not always wait,
Of justice that smites but does not hate,
Of love and the sacrifice it brings,
And of all the old heroic things
That make men noble and nations great."

Oh, well for the land where voices break
From mouldering wood and crumbling stone
To urge the present hour to make
The glory of the past its own !
But ill for the land, oh, ill, ill, ill,
If cold indifference gains the crown,
Turns, and forgets the old renown,
Letting those holy voices drown
At last, and grow forever still!

IV

Look, the ocean warrior comes !
Wave your banners, beat your drums,
Thunder it over land and foam,
Welcome, welcome, welcome home !

But who is this that comes forlorn
Of sail and mast, so old, so worn,
And marred, and scarred,
And borne by a power not hers along,
As age that is feeble by youth that is strong,
An empty, ruinous, cumbersome shell,—
Is this the vessel that wrought so well ?

If, as the wise do ever hold,
If it be life, true life, to give
Even life's own self for noble ends,
And, when the powers are spent, to live
In that for which one gives and spends,
Then better is the life grown old
In such a service, though it creeps
A silent shadow from place to place,
Better, oh, better a thousand-fold
Than that which hoards, and eats, and sleeps,
Saves its dear self for self, and keeps
The telltale freshness of its face.

And this spent life of hers is found,
Regathered as a living power,
Wherever freedom holds the ground,
Or manhood rules the hour ;
Found in the laws that round us stand
At every hearthstone in the land ;
Found in the lifted arm that bars
The invader from our sacred shore ;
Ay, like that vanished ship of yore,
Found in the imperishable stars !

v

Oak and cedar and pine
And iron and copper — were these the whole ?
Will dumb, dead things like these combine
Ever, to make a ship of the line,
Without the patriot sailor-soul ?

'T is the human touch alone that brings
The life, and puts the tongue in things ;
And this old vessel, although the wreck
And shadow of the power she was,
Is full of eloquent voice because
Of the men who trod her deck.

The glory that is round her shed,
All glory born of battles won —

'T is not of ship, or sail, or gun ;
'T is of the man, when all is done,
It is the man's, when all is said.

VI

And it was men, O Ship of State,
That fashioned thee and made thee great,
And brought thee on thy perilous way,
Through storms against thy bulwarks hurled,
And left thee what thou art today,
The envy of the nations of the world !

But, O my country, great and fair,
Mark well the clouds that fill the air ;
Shun the dark fate of them that dare
And care no more, that, with averted head,
Seek ease, and leave all glory with the dead !
Beware, beware, beware !
Beware the lust of office and of gold ;
Breed men, strong men, like those strong men of old —
Men whom base-born ambition can not lure,
Who sway not with the rabble's fickle mood,
But, steadfast in themselves, in motive pure,
Love more than self their country's common good ;
Men of that high, heroic altitude
Of purpose which is seen and known afar,
Large-minded, simple, patriotic men,

Who follow conscience ever like a star,
And lift a nation to its place again !

O ye, who lived a life so true
In days forever and ever gone,
But somewhere even now live on,
Come back, for we have need of you,
Come from your far-off land today,
O noble great ones, come away,
And meet and mingle with us here,
Unseen, though held forever dear,
And fill us with the heavenly fire
Of aspiration and desire
To do and dare and some day be
Found worthy of your company.

VII

Hark ! I hear the sunset gun ;
Invisible hands are letting down
The soft gray veil over harbor and town ;
This memorable day is done.

She is the nation's now, and here,
Where, round the landscape which we love,
Shapes more than human seem to move
In the dim shadow and draw near,
She, too, belongs, and has her part

With the great memories born before,
And is a memory in the heart
With them forever and evermore.

Here, as the days go streaming by
And lengthen to unnumbered years,
In quiet may the good ship lie,
With her name and her fame and her great compeers
And the glory that can not die.

THE PASSING OF SPAIN FROM THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

THE Lord communed with His heart in heaven
And said : “ It has been My way
To cancel at last the men or the States
That sin and disobey.
Four hundred years I have waited — four,
And still they are starved and slain.
That My name on earth be revered more,
Shall I make an end of Spain ? ”

For the prayers rolled up about His throne,
Like a cloud, from every side ;
And vast the cloud of the witnesses —
The souls of those who had died.
Columbus himself was there ; said he :
“ I found her the virgin lands
Of half the world ; she found for me
The chains upon my hands.”

And the souls of her best citizens came,
Five hundred thousand strong,

To tell of the Inquisition fires
And all that giant wrong.
And the souls of the sons of the Netherlands came
And said 't was thus and thus :
“ Remember Philip and Alva's shame —
Lord, how they butchered us ! ”

And the souls of the slain, from far away
In Mexico and Peru,
Cried to the Power that seeks and saves,
“ Good Lord, the charge is true ! ”
And the souls of them that suffered and fell
In the islands of the main,
Thousands on thousands, came to swell
The awful guilt of Spain.

Then said the Lord in His great sad heart :
“ It shall no more endure ;
If I rise in My might and make an end,
My justice stands secure.”
And He motioned the seraphs that do His word,
To fly to the earth and do ;
And the flaming seraphs that bear the sword,
In silence bowed and flew.

They said as they flew : “ The earth is His
To save, not the devil's to mar ;

Some things are better than money is,
And some things worse than war."
The seraphs, as onward still they swept,
Cried : " Fear not ; it is well ;
For this kind goeth not out except
By sword and shot and shell."

At last the darkening shadow drew
Across the morning sun ;
A shiver, as if presaging doom,
Throughout the world did run.
And when the cloud, so big with dread,
Broke over Manila's bay,
The far-off nations whispering said :
" Hush ! Spain is passing away."

Down through the Windward Passage, round
The sweep of the southern seas,
The cloud belched forth of its righteousness
To heal sin's long disease.
For hither and thither the seraphs went,
Who ne'er bear sword in vain,
And to heaven and earth their mission meant
The passing away of Spain.

When they sheathed the sword, and the guns
grew cold,

And the desolate Isle was free ;
When the ships that carried the fragments off
Put sullenly forth to sea,—
The eyes of every people and land
Watched, silent and awed at the plain
Irresistible pressure of God's right hand,
The passing away of Spain.

THE SPECTRES OF MARATHON

HIST ! did you see him arise ? Did you mind
How he rode in the moonlight away like the
wind,

And never a print of his horse's feet
Was left on the turf behind ?

I have somewhere read that the buried slain
Are seen to arise from their graves again
As spectres — arise at the midnight hour
On the old Marathonian plain ;

That often the lingering shepherd descries
On the dim Ægean, in silent surprise,
The phantom fleet of the coming foe
Like a mist that shoreward flies ;

And the form of Miltiades riding his round
To awaken his men on the far-famed ground ;
And then the old battle is fought once more —
With arms that make no sound.

Of trembling vapors the banners are,
The spears are vapors, as vapors afar

The Persians reel and retreat to their ships
At the sign of the morning star.

I have read that scarcely a night may be
But this vision of ships sweeps in from the sea,
And the horseman rides, and the Greeks arise,
And the Persians — they always flee !

Oh, beautiful legend the Greeks have told
Of a spot where freedom was saved of old !
Its meaning has widened from shore to shore,
And its voices are manifold.

In every land where the brave have died,
Their deeds and memories ever abide ;
They haunt the old graves and are spectres at times
On the plain or the green hillside.

'T is not in vain, in the fields once red,
That a nation's defenders are lying dead,
Where the sentinel paces unseen on his beat
And by greener tents instead.

From their silent encampment underground
They hear, and arise, and forever confound
Their country's invader, although they strive
With arms that make no sound.

GREECE

1897

ONE nation against the many,
The smallest among them all ;
It will not take long for deciding —
The small one must go to the wall.
But hush ! while the winds are blowing
These voices in from afar,
It sounds as it often has sounded
When God goes forth to war.

'T is often the one and the many,
And sometimes with proud command
The many bring up their battalions
To crush out the truth in a land.
God laughs in His heaven to see them,
And chooseth some little thing ;
Remember the giant Goliath
And the stripling with his sling.

All honor to leader and people
Who know that right makes might,

And that never a question was settled
Until it was settled right.
While some are cowardly asking
How much may be won or lost,
Thank God for the men like these men
Who will not count the cost.

Thermopylæ in the mountains
And Marathon by the sea !
Their spirit survives and is ever
The spirit that makes men free.
“Come back with your shield or upon it,”
Runs the word through field and town.
God help the brave State that for justice
Is daring to fight and go down !

But shame for the lordly great ones
Who share the Arch-murderer's gain
In their golden halls on the Neva,
On the Spree, or the Thames, or the Seine !
And let them beware, and be ready
For something more terrible far,
If at last, in His wrath and His glory,
God does go forth to war !

THE CITY OF VISION

THE CITY OF VISION

IT does not crumble like others away,
This dream-built City. A dream, did I say ?
Yes, once it was John's ; it is mine to-day,
And the world's forever and ever.

Though men are selfish and fond of strife,
And wrongs and sorrowful things are rife,
The world dreams on of a different life,
And a nobler, forever and ever.

On the pale, sad face and the tattered gown
And the trouble and shame of our earthly town
The vision of what might be looks down,
So pure and so silent, forever.

A worthier life and fairer to see,
A loftier purpose in you and in me,
More brotherly conduct,—these might be,
Might be both now and forever.

Oh, the vision ! It streams over all we do,
And the fierce light of it smites through and through ;
That light is the truth of the things that are true
Forever and ever and ever.

God lives and reigns ; and the right lives too,
Though little about it the old gods knew ;
And love and duty ; all these are true
Forever and ever and ever.

Ah, God, how little our eyes discern,
How very slowly we seem to learn,
Of the great ideals of life that burn
So near us forever and ever !

CO-OPERATION

I

“COME,” said the little Ether-Atoms,
“Let us cling together and march together.
Millions and millions and millions are we ;
Let us form and march like the waves of the sea,
With shoulder to shoulder, hand linked in hand,
Line behind line of us. Here we stand !
Steady, there ! Wait for the word of command.
Steady, my comrades ! Is everything right ?
Now, all as one of us, into the night !”
So they clung together and marched together,
And the world was filled with light.

II

“Come,” said the little Vibrations-in-Air,
“Let us cling together and work together,
Starting not off on our separate tracks,
But all within touch, that whatever each lacks
The rest may supply, and that each, great or small,
May something contribute — to soar, run, or crawl —

Toward the one common end ; there is work for us
all ;

And mingling our efforts, the weak with the strong,
Break we a path through the silence along !”
So they clung together and helped one another,
And the world was filled with song.

III

“ And now,” said the children of men on earth,
“ Let us cling together, and work together,
And help one another, and turn our words
Into golden action, and sheathe our swords !
Let us tunnel the mountain, span the plain,
Stretch hands to each other across the main,
And each man’s wealth be for all men’s gain ;
Then unto his neighbor let every one
Say, ‘ Be of good courage,’ and let the word run.”
So they clung together, and, lo, as in heaven
His will upon earth was done !

GREATNESS

I

WHAT makes a man great? Is it houses and
land?

Is it argosies dropping their wealth at his feet?

Is it multitudes shouting his name in the street?

Is it power of brain? Is it skill of hand?

Is it writing a book? Is it guiding the State?

Nay, nay, none of these can make a man great.

II

The crystal burns cold with its beautiful fire,

And is what it is; it can never be more;

The acorn, with something wrapped warm at the
core,

In quietness says, "To the oak I aspire."

That something in seed and in tree is the same;

What makes a man great is his greatness of aim.

III

What is greatness of aim? Your purpose to trim

For bringing the world to obey your behest?

Oh no, it is seeking God's perfect and best,

Making something the same both in you and in Him.

Love what He loves, and, child of the sod,

Already you share in the greatness of God.

THE IMMORTALS

THINK ! the gods have been among us, seen us,
marked our speech and tone,
Touched the smallness of our natures with the largeness of their own,
Deigned to walk the path beside us, in our homes to eat and drink,
They, the deathless, ever-blessed — O my comrades, do you think ?

And we watched them, never dreaming they were more than common men,—
Though we heard their gracious language, though again and yet again
We beheld the generous fashion which they used in going through
Every task and every duty given unto men to do,—
Till the great occasion called them, showed their stature to us, drew
Off the vail that hid their faces, as they vanished and we knew.

Hush ! they may be walking round us in the twilight — who shall say ?—

Others of the gods, and seeking if we give them yea or nay,

We, the deaf ones, we, the blind ones, needing better ears and eyes

To discern the great immortals through whatever thin disguise,

That, amid the blaze of noonday or the evening's purple glow,

We may heed them, know them, love them, ere these also rise and go.

SIC VOS NON VOBIS

YES, Roman Vergil said it right ; and 't is an old,
old story :

Not always he who does the deed is he who gets the
glory.

You toil not for yourselves, O bees—another takes
the honey ;

Not for yourselves, O human hands —another piles
the money.

The fame the poet true should wear, upon the rhyme-
ster blazes ;

The prophet wins the frowns of men, the mountebank
their praises.

But, noble soul, if thou must lose thy nobleness in
striving,

Content with only that on which some smaller soul is
thriving ;

If thou must yield thy larger gift, thine aspiration
smother—

For all the glories of the world, say, wouldst thou be
that other ?

The Angel of the Presence, on the paths of men pursuing,
Makes virtue still its own reward, and wrong its own undoing ;
Still Providence, with steady hand and purposes unswerving,
Bestows the worthiest gift of all upon the most deserving :
The consciousness of noble aim, the rapture of endeavor,
These most are his who most deserves, and may be stolen never.

Be faithful, toiler of the world ; where'er thy task is given,
It needs thy best—on earth as in the altitudes of heaven.
Work, caring much for excellence—for seeming, not a feather—
So shalt thou know the fellowship that binds great souls together ;
And, with the larger wisdom filled, retell the ancient story :
Who does the deed shall have the meed ; let others take the glory.

JUDAS

“ He then having received the sop went immediately out : and it was night.”

NO common night, but such as comes at last
When faith is ended,—when that mighty star,
Once flaming in the zenith of the soul,
Loosed from its place drops lower and lower down,
And, with the gradual spending of its power,
Reaches the dim horizon, then expires,
Never to kindle, never shine, again :
The creeping doubt o'erwhelms and changes all.

Thou art alone ; turn as thou wilt thy face,
Or north or south or east or west, thou art,
Thou with that troubled face, as one who hears
The unfathomable wells of the great deep
Roar in the darkness near him, knowing not
At what false step they rise and gulp him down.
The brook makes melody below the hill,
But not for thee ; the moon and stars o'erhead
Are shining, but they do not shine for thee ;
Thou art outside the governance of God,

Self-exiled, picking thy own way, poor soul,
No rays of happy thoughts to prick the gloom,
No daystar of a promise of the dawn,
No trusted Presence going on before,
Nor any voice now saying, "Follow me."

Take that thine is and go upon thy way ;
Thou hast it, thou hast earned it, it is thine ;
It counts thee thirty pieces, take it all ;
Thou wilt have need of it, it is thy all,
The price of innocent blood,—oh, guard it well.

For thou hast seen with what a gentle hand
He touched blind eyes, deaf ears, restored the sick,
Bound up the broken-hearted (His own heart
Breaking with sorrow of its own the while),
How spake such words as seemed like blessèd rain
Falling from heaven on the parchèd ground.
He will no more : thy hand has drawn the cloud
Around Him ; when tomorrow He shall pass,
Bowed, spat on, called blasphemer,—He,
The whitest soul that ever dwelt on earth,—
And, as by chance, His silent eyes meet thine,
Thou, friend and follower, wilt need comfort then :
Look on thy silver, let that comfort thee.

He chose thee, opened in thy life a door,
Set visions in thine eyes, told thee His plans,
And, trusting, loved thee with the love wherewith

Loving His own He loves them to the end.
Thou hast been standing in a sacred place—
Thou knowest not these things ; thou mayest know
Hereafter—in the circle hast thou stood,
Where, not so much as one arm's length away,
God hath Himself stood center ; one of those
Whom, out of all that live or have lived, God
Nearest hath drawn to show to them His face.

Even so ; and they shall be His witnesses,
Shall do His will, shall ever bear His light,
And, as their great deeds widen through all time,
Shall sit upon twelve thrones—eleven now,
For one is empty—judging the whole world
By the self-sacrifice of earnest lives,—
James with the sword slain, Peter crucified,
John preaching the new love a hundred years ;
The rest as faithful, suffering for His sake
And looking to behold His face again ;
All leaving golden memories—and thou ?
That name, that blackest shadow of a name,
Moving in solemn whispers round the world
From land to land, from age to age, that name
Darkening all love,—Betrayers of his Friend.
Thy silver, O thy silver, hold it fast.

The great cause will go prospering down the years,
Others be steadfast where thy heart has failed,

Others receive what thou hast cast away.
One pauses, makes an end ; another takes
His bishopric ; God's purposes endure,
God's instruments are ever at His hand.
Yea, that which seemeth but a little thing
Will grow and gather volume age by age,
And set the spacious arches of all time
A-tremble with the glory of the song
Poured through them ; it will roll far on,
And roll away from bounds of human sin,
Indrawing to itself,—this great new song,—
Whatever anywhere is good and true
And beautiful, until full-orbed it fills
The walls of that fair City like the sound
Of many waters, and is heard afar,
Ten thousand times ten thousand voices blent
In one great voice, and saying evermore :
“Blessing and honor, majesty and power,
Be unto Him who sitteth on the throne,
And to the Lamb forever and forever.”

Thou knowest not all this, but thou wilt know
Hereafter—Lo, what javelin of light,
Shot from the sky of undiscovered things,
Hath rent the cloud and pierced thee to the heart ?
Thou lettest fall thy silver and art gone,
Fled like a spirit in the trackless void,

Fled, gone, but not from thy own self, not gone
From the pursuing Eye that looked on Cain ;
In Heaven, in Hell, that Eye will look on thee.

But what if, some day, fragments of the song
Should faintly reach thee where thou wanderest,
And thou shouldst pause, not knowing, turn, and creep
A little nearer, listening, and shouldst find
In long-deserted chambers of the soul
An unremembered echo stir and wake,
And visionary faces cross thy view
Like faces seen in starlight, dimly known ;
And, at the moment when a louder burst
Lifted upon the air that sacred Name,
What if as on a darkened screen were flashed
Into thy mind the image of Himself,
Sold in the garden with a treacherous kiss !
Perchance, guilt-smitten, dazed, thou wouldst not
flee,—

Not flee at once,—but, hands to eyes, creep on,
Creep nearer still, a poor dumb spirit now,
Hoping, from some lone corner in the shade,
To see His face, then go away forever.

And what if He, from out whose heart thy name
Had never faded, should perceive, and thou,
Still bowed, shouldst feel a light break round and
grow,

Feel—daring not so much as look and see—
A Being leave the holy throng and come,
As doth the dawn with glory-mantled form
Sending a splendor onward as it comes,—
Shouldst feel each footstep pour more dreadful light
Around thee trembling, knowing it was He ;
Until again, not one arm's length away,
He stood, bent o'er, then silence, then a voice—
Oh, memory of the days of Galilee !—
The voice that searches swordlike in the soul,
Through layer on layer of evil, to the core,
And bids the man within us rise and live.

Could such things be—I do not say they could ;
I only say that couldst thou see and know
(Thine was the fault thou didst not see and know),
Know thy own self, and Him, and what the love
That dies not with man's faith, but still endures,—
I say thou mightst be other than thou art ;
Yea, of His faithful ones, perchance ; even thou.
(Who dare affirm it, or, in his own heart,
Deny it thus, not knowing all God's plan ?)
For thou, of all that ever lived on earth,
Art one to bear burned deep into thy soul—
Could such things be—the sad eternal truth,
That it were better never to have sinned,
Never have sinned, than sinned and been forgiven.

IN MEMORIAM

T. C. P.

SKIES were not yet red with sunset, far off still the
evening bell,
Only sights and sounds of midday eye and ear could
seem to tell,
And we knew not that our greeting was the greeting
of farewell,

Did not know, in our rejoicing, that the hour had
waxed so late,
That the tides were sobbing seaward which can neither
turn nor wait,
And already in our presence stood the Opener of the
Gate.

Thin the veil that hides the future we have never
seen nor can,
And that future somehow mingles strangely in the
life of man,
While we see in part, and only see in part, the Father's
plan.

Every life hath its completeness—Are there not twelve
hours still

In the day?—and whosoever makes his own the
Master's will,

Living, dying, staying, going, doth the circle all
fulfill.

Friend of ours, we did not tell thee all we might have
told that day;

Many another thing we cherished in our heart of
hearts to say,

Had we known it was expedient thou so soon shouldst
go away.

We were looking for achievement, and the victory
had been won;

For the golden years of service—with the sands so
nearly run;

Yea, we thought it the beginning, when God said thy
work was done.

We shall not forget thee—never, while the way before
us towers;

Something from thy life in passing touched the inner
springs in ours.

Thou henceforth art in alliance there with God's
uplifting powers.

Thou art here ; lo, thou art yonder, where the heavenly
seasons roll,
Where in light and life immortal ends the pathway of
the soul,—
One hand beckoning, and the other resting on the
shining goal.

THE DEAD TEACHER

Professor Packard, of Bowdoin College, fell dead while walking on the beach at Squirrel Island, only three days after he had presided at the Commencement exercises. These lines were read at the funeral.

AH ! but yesterday we saw him there in the familiar place,

Where he welcomed all as children with his old-time courtly grace ;

And we knew not it was Heaven that was shining on his face.

Light was nearer than we thought it, for today we come and find

He has passed beyond the shadows which had made our eyes so blind ;

And his more than fourscore summers are a golden trail behind.

Walking by the narrow margin that divides the sea and land

Of the Here and the Hereafter, he beheld, upon the strand,

Words of One, who, as aforetime, stooped and wrote upon the sand.

Two there were that walked together ; they communed,
as friend with friend,
On the mysteries, it may be, only angels comprehend ;
One, the Christ, wrote with his finger ; one, the Christian,
read—" The End."

Silent do his books await him on their shelves in long array,
But his book of life is ended and is silent now as they,
And will henceforth stand among them to be seen and read
always !

What thou wert, O silent teacher, what thou wert
and still thou art,
Men inherit and will cherish ; we possess the better part,
We, thy pupils, in the fibers of the living brain and heart.

Thou art happy ! Thou, discerning from the summit
of thy years,
Long hast seen the promise over rolling mist of doubts
and fears,—
Seen the vision of the future, and thou dost not need
our tears.

Sleep ! the peace of God upon thee—sleep ! and let
the heavenly signs

Hold their ways in solemn silence till the world's great
morning shines,

Where thou retest from thy labors in the hearing of
the pines !

THE TREE AND THE STAR

May 14, 1900

S AID the tree upon earth to the star in the sky :
“She sleeps, and is here at my feet ;
She walked in my shadow in days gone by,
And her deeds and her life were sweet.”

Said the star in the sky to the tree upon earth :
“She dwells in my home far above
Thy dark little world of the home of her birth ;
She was born for the light and for love.”

O tree, and O star, she was all that you say,
And her soul like a star did shine ;
Yet little you know of God's great way :
She is here in this heart of mine.

ALL SOULS' EVE

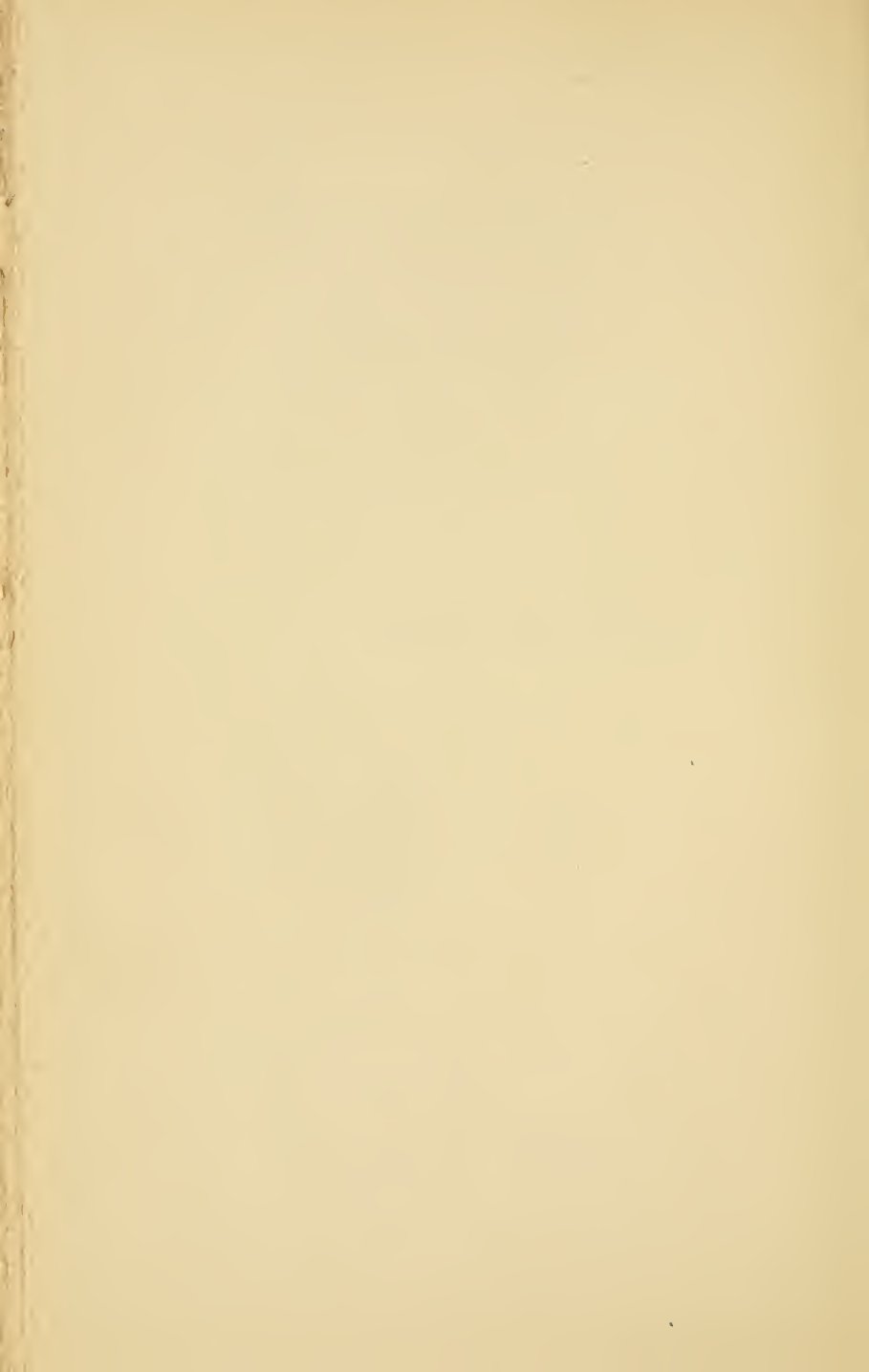
THE river drags across the plain
Its winding line of black ;
But far above I see again
The ever shining track.
O silent dead, O happy souls,
I dare not call you back !

Before my eyes a vision drew
Like sunlight out of space ;
I fancied in the shadow grew
One dear familiar face,—
I felt a breath, I heard a voice
Of infinite sweet grace.

Beat not so loud, O heart of mine,
Be calm, O wandering will,
The wind is past, the talking pine
Hath whispered and is still.
All here is as the marbles are
That glimmer on the hill.

But, lo, the singing tides above
 Grow full and do not slack ;
There mind has light, and heart has love,
 With never stint or lack.
Life bears me thither, silent dead ;
 I will not call you back.

IN DIVERS TONES



THE GOD OF THE GATE

SILENT, while beneath his arch
Still the long processions march,
With his gaze forevermore
On the after and before,
Janus, in serene estate,
Keepeth watch above the gate.

On his face the morning falls
Golden-red from eastern walls ;
Evening's solemn splendor dies
Last of all in his clear eyes.
His the vision wherein blend
The beginning and the end.

Long has been the trodden way
Since the breaking of the day ;
Many and many a year will run
Ere the final task be done.
Past and future at his feet
Like two mighty spirits meet.

Through yon archway Cæsar rolled ;
Wheels and emperor now are mold,
Armies fallen into dust,
Shouts to silence, swords to rust,
While the god of soon and late
Watches still above the gate.

Realms of silence deep and vast
Are the future and the past ;
And the god that dwells between,
Seeing what is yet unseen,
Keeps their secret,—'t is his task ;
Mine to wait and not to ask.

Quickly will the written scroll
In the hands of Time unroll ;
Soon enough shall I behold
What is new become the old.
Hopeful, reverent, I bow
At the gate of here and now.

Father Janus, if thou may,
Let a blessing crown my way ;
On from what was dear to me
Into days that are to be,
Knowing not the gift of fate,
Once again I pass thy gate.

OPPORTUNITY

OH, well for him who can discern
What thoughts may grow to noble deeds,
Who has the power to see and learn
His blessings slumbering in the seeds !
Oh, well for him who understands
The silent voices, beckoning hands,
Nor fears to follow them to some good fate
Which else lies evermore within the unopened gate !

THE SWORD

A KEEN-EDGED sword in Somebody's hand ;
And keen the edge of the pain it brings ;
Long, long ago it thrust and pricked
And prodded about at the roots of things.
It searched and troubled the hollows dark,
It troubles the world and stirs up strife,
It troubles the beast of the field and man :
The name of this troublesome sword is — Life.

The oyster lay like a lump content,
Content with himself and his mud and slime ;
The sword thrust under him till at last
He said, " There is nothing to do but climb."
A million of years — for oysters are slow
And only ask to be let alone —
He climbed ; he climbed clean out of his shell,
And, lo ! was a fish with a good backbone.

The fish was happy ; the fish loved ease
And lazily paddled the summer sea,
With never a thought of his home in the mud,
And never a dream of what must be.

But pain ran through him, he knew not why ;
The sword was there in Somebody's hand ;
It pricked him once from the slime to the sea,
It pricked him now from the sea to the land.

He stood a beast with four great feet,
And a yard of tail to follow him round ;
Content he was with a beast's content
To eat and drink and lie on the ground.
But the sword was after him still, and still
The old pain racked as it racked before ;
The ease he loved seemed never so far,
And all he could do was to climb some more.

For many and many a myriad years
The poor beast climbed ; the way was blind ;
He wore his yard of tail to a stump,
Then dropped the stump in the woods behind.
His paws grew hands and he stood erect ;
One morning, the sun just over the brink,
There flashed a spark through his beastly brain,
And he said, " I 'm a man, for I can think ! "

And man loves ease ; the Lord knows that ;
For oyster and fish and beast combine
To smother his new-born soul of fire
And drag him back to the earth and the brine.

But pain and trouble take hold on man ;
The terrible sword doth prick and prod ;
He finds no peace, for there is no peace
For man till he reaches the utmost—God.

ORPHEUS

HEAR that lonely-hearted bird
In the cypress calling so !
Hear its oft-repeated word,
“Orpheus,” “Orpheus,” sad and low,
Floating outward through the shadows—
Can it be a bird or no ?

Where the poet's grave was cold,
And the low branch bended o'er,
Sang the nightingale of old
Of the Voice that sang no more ?
Is it true, or but a story
From the marvelous days of yore ?

Ay, such glory is not past ;
Many a poet finds the same ;
O'er his voiceless dust at last
Sings the golden tongue of fame,—
Something in the songs he left us
Uttering still the singer's name.

THE CITY OF THE VIOLET CROWN

HE is dead and gone, with his wonderful skill,
The poet who once by a sound
Made boulder and birch-tree dance to his will,
And a city arise from the ground.

One night, where the haunted Cephissus pours
Its shrunken wave to the sea,
Some flute-notes, wafted along the shores,
Were the same as Amphion's to me.

For they built thee again in my quiet dreams,
O City of the Violet Crown ;
As silent as rises the mist from the streams,
Thy walls rose over the town.

On the gleaming height where the Parthenon lay,
Like a beautiful changeless cloud,
Stood the maiden goddess arrayed for the fray,
Majestic, and silent, and proud.

Her brazen shield in the sunlight shone
Far out on the trembling blue,

As a welcoming star, as a sign well known,
To the home-returning crew.

The seals were broken on urn and grave,
And many a vanished face
Was seen once more in the living wave
Of the street or the market-place.

But all the while it was envious Death
Still masking ; the vision of peace
Became as a fabric upheld by a breath,—
I feared that my flutter would cease.

Ill-omened fear ! That moment I found
The faces beginning to pass ;
All faded, as phantoms fade underground
When the dawn breathes over the grass.

The dawn had risen, the broken spell
I could not recover then ;
Time's withering glance on thy temples fell,
And thou wert a ruin again.

Nay, not all ruin ! In air and sky,
In thy old historic hill,
A sense of something that cannot die
There lingered, and lingers still,—

A gleam of the light that forever will be
On all the nations afar,
Like the trail that falls over the summer sea
At the set of the Titan star.

Oh, well to remember the deeds and days
Of thy past, handed silently down,
While the sun on thy forehead of mountains lays,
Fair city, the Violet Crown !

THE WIZARD POET

IN the dust of ages old
Sleeps the legend men have told
Of Vergilius and his skill :
How he, wicked or divine,
Wrought by secret spell and sign
Many marvels to his will ;

How he breathed the vital flame
Through a pulseless statue's frame,
So that when the night's eclipse
Left its face it spake aloud,—
And no idle words or proud
Ever passed its marble lips ;

How he made a lamp to light
All the city streets by night ;
Made and rode a copper mare,
And from Babylon to Rome
Brought the Sultan's daughter home,
On a bridge built in the air.

Necromancer, poet, sage,
He bewildered all his age ;
 Men, on other business bent,
Lingered when he waved his hand,
And not one could understand
 What the subtle magic meant.

Ah ! his books upon my shelves
Hold the secret in themselves
 Of the marvelous art he knew !
When we read, the written signs
Luminous grow in all the lines,—
 What he did his books still do !

In their silence and disguise
They are genii that arise,
 Building bridges with their hands ;
And our life's unending quest
Here may pause awhile and rest
 In the lap of golden lands.

Shepherd pipes around us sing,
Branches musically swing
 In the west wind's cooling tides !
Then the shadows of the night,
Dropping earthward in their flight,
 Darken o'er the mountain sides !

In the distance seem to be
Boats upon the toiling sea,
 Oars adrip with silver foam ;
Wave-tossed men of Troy almost
Grasp the e'er receding coast,
 Dreaming of their lofty Rome.

So the poet hath his will,
Working out his marvels still,
 Makes us linger as we read !
In our hearts a statue stands,—
White and pure its lips and hands,
 Symbolizing word and deed ;

And the statue, as it were,
Is the poet's character,
 Spotless in that age of wrong.
Did he travel in the air ?
Ay, the bridge suspended there
 Was the marvelous Bridge of Song !

And the greatness of his name
Pierces, with a silent flame,
 Death and the sepulchral damp ;
Somehow, still it seems to light
Rome in all her streets tonight,
 And is a perpetual lamp.

Statue, bridge, and lamp unfold
Deeper meanings than of old :

His was no uncanny art ;
He but used the spell and sign
Of the poet's right divine,—
Wizard of the human heart !

THE SILENT CITY

The words "Conticuere omnes," from the first line of the second book of the *Æneid*, were found scrawled on a wall excavated at Pompeii.

"SILENT they all became"—strange words to be
Uncovered in the dust, where ages keep
Their ruins old and deep,—
Where, in that buried city by the sea,
In homes they builded and no longer need,
Silent all are indeed !

Did he whose pencil traced the letters there,
Do it for love of the Vergilian phrase
In those far distant days ;
Or see, by some presentment, in the air
The shadow of the undiscerning fate
That laid all desolate ?

These silent people,—these, whose names are fled,
Who day by day walked this deserted place
And saw each other's face.—
We need not ask what human lives they led,
Or with what prayers in that wild storm of flame
Silent they all became.

Men of our kind, they loved the earth and air
And sense of being ; loved to buy and sell ;
Loved pleasure overwell ;
Knew hope, ambition, disappointment, care ;
Called oft for help on some all-pitying Name ;—
So, till the silence came.

Out of the dust that slumbers on the ground
What sounds unto the poet's ears arise,
What visions to his eyes !
Then in the Present's loud, tumultuous sound
He finds what silences, where men and walls
Are as the dust that falls !

TO AN ARCHEOLOGIST

METHINKS you have come rather late, Sir,
The banquet is over. Begin
And knock, if you choose, at the gate, Sir,—
I fear they will not ask you in.

Listen ! the music is ended,
The lamps in the chambers are dead ;
With silence the voices have blended,
The king and his guests are abed.

You might have come hither from Gades
(Permit me to add) in the West,
Since the lords said good-night and the ladies
Went smiling away to their rest.

The watchers and wards of the towers
Are asleep at their posts, or away —
Not heard there at least for some hours,—
Oh, the soundest of sleepers are they !

But try with your rattle and clatter,
And — what, will you break through the wall,

And take what you want and no matter ?
Not a guest, but a thief, after all !

Well, perhaps you are right ; 't is a pity
That treasure should stay here so long
Unused in this sleepy old city,—
Perhaps you are doing no wrong.

For though with the smile of a Cæsar
You carry your cartfuls away,
I warrant you Tiglath-Pilezer
Could give you the odds in his day

As a thief ! Why, the arch you are under
Very likely was built—if you choose
To remember his failings—of plunder
He took from his neighbors, the Jews.

His treatment of them was as shabby
As yours is of him, you discern ;
When they dig up your Westminster Abbey,
'T will even ; we all have our turn.

But reflect, as you dig it and dump it—
Your spadeful, I mean—in your raids,
How a blast from the ultimate trumpet
Would outrival a million of spades !

This silent and slumbering nation
In layers so deep in the ground,

All the pulverized population
Which the breezes are blowing around ;

The chariot wheels and the horses,
The soldiers, the captains, the men
Once kings but now innocent corses,
I 'm certain could startle you then !

Remember, I say, if you must keep
At work at your pilfering so,
What a stir there would be in your dust-heap
If the trumpet should happen to blow.

INVOCATION TO HORACE

From a poem read at a dinner of the Bowdoin Alumni Association,
of Boston.

IF ghosts come back,—and some ghosts do,—
We would invite the ghost of you,
Horatius Flaccus, poet.
Put your old harp in when you pack,
Because a song is what we lack ;
You, Quintus, must bestow it.

We know you 're in the place below,
Where Dante put you long ago,
And whence he would not lose you ;
But, if our need you let him know,
Perhaps for half an hour or so
He kindly will excuse you.

Yes, bards are plenty, I am sure ;
Their barding, yes, is rather poor—
Just that, whate'er our choice is ;
Nor many now the ears that hear,
When goose and swan in song appear,
The difference in their voices.

But yours men know, Imperial Swan,—
The sweetness, sense, with which anon
 You mingle fact and fable ;
You are of all, beyond excuse,
The fittest man to introduce
 The Muses at the table.

You loved good friends, you loved good cheer,
You 'd love the way we do things here,
 You dearly loved a dinner ;
Come back and sing ; if thin your song,
Because you 've been a ghost so long,
 Mine surely must be thinner.

Don't fear we 'll mention, though we can,
The lie you told the only man
 You looked on as your foeman,—
I mean that everlasting bore,
At whom we know you inly swore
 In Latin, like a Roman.

The day I stood where, in the past,
You saw the last of him at last,
 My heart towards you did soften ;
Your tomb was reared by Tiber's side—
The bore's ? Alas, he never died,
 For I have seen him often !

Sometimes he calls to sell me books,
Insure my life like his, and looks
 The image of persuasion ;
Sometimes, I know not why, he tries,
In thinnest of all thin disguise,
 As poet of occasion !

Come back and save us, mighty ghost,
Come, spare the guest, and spare the host ;
 Your forms you need not vary,—
An ode, an epode, you may bring,
A satire, almost anything ;
 Bring *Carmen Seculare*.

Alas ! good friends, he will not come ;
He stands within the shadow, dumb,
 Face grinning, arms akimbo ;
No breath of his on my small sail ;
He waits to see me try and fail—
 'T is I that squirm in limbo !

LONGFELLOW

At about the time Bowdoin College received a replica of the bust placed in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, the editors of *The Orient* commemorated that event and also the poet's birthday by issuing a Longfellow number, for which, at their request, these lines were written.

O H, what to sing or say of him whom both the
Englands crown,
When time is past for verse or voice to add to his
renown !

There in the ancient Abbey, with the glory that it
brings,
The features we have known look down upon the
dust of kings.

The mighty spirits of the past seem, in their shadows
dim,
To move among themselves and make a welcome
space for him.

'T is vain to praise, and vainer yet his wondrous art to
tell ;
The arrows of his song are hid in hearts that know
it well.

But when I see the wave of fame has made how
wide a ring,
What shores his name has touched, oh, then I proudly
try to sing,

That here, in this familiar place, first rose his magic
strain ;
Like us he loved the air and light that clothe the fields
of Maine.

I sing that silently, dear land of river and of pine,
A mother's joy pervades thy breast remembering he
is thine.

Thou never wilt or canst forget the year and month
and day,
Never forget, till time's slow wave shall wear itself
away.

For, though the singer's feet have passed beyond thy
bourne so far,
Beyond all bounds that men have known, beyond the
sunset bar,

To thee, of all the spots on earth, he left his great
renown,
And thou art still the mother home of him the
Englands crown.

WHITTIER

1887

With the calm patience of the woods I wait
For leaf and blossom when God gives us spring.

WHITTIER.

SURELY, Great Heart, though leaf and blossom
come,

And the long splendor of the Mayday suns,
Thy need is less : we are the needy ones
Whose hearts sing little and are mostly dumb.

They tell me — I have never seen thy face —
They tell me that thy days have somehow passed
Into November, that old age at last
Has stolen upon thee with its silent pace.

I do not know. It seems a little while
To thee, no doubt ; a little while it were,
Since in thy heart God's gift began to stir,
Since stretched the way before thee, mile on mile ;

A little while to live, if counted years,
Such as we spend in earthly toil and strife,

Were taken as the measure of a life ;
But God's great music trembles in our ears :

Who lives for truth shall live as long as truth.

Thou hast grown old ? If this be age, I ween
Of all the things which I have ever seen
It is the likest to immortal youth.

Like a great voice thy still increasing song
Goes throbbing up and down the vales and hills
Of our New England, and forever thrills
The people's hearts to make them true and strong.

Thy need is less. Let varying seasons bring
Green leaf or brown, all seasons are thine own ;
For from thy heart the birds have never flown :
Whate'er the time, God always gives thee spring.

A SALUTATION

POET, that salutest Vergil with a strain so tender,
sweet, and clear,

It might almost pierce the shadows, Orpheus-like,
and charm his spirit ear ;

Merlin of the prophets ! seeing back and forward
through the aisles of time,

Building up its golden visions into palaces of stately
rhyme ;

Lover of the ancient legend — lo, Ulysses on his island-
throne,

And the sorrowful C  none wandering in the lovely
vale alone !

Thou that singest Arthur's kingdom and the sin of
faithless Guinevere,

Enid's woe, the knightly circle, Galahad without
reproach or fear ;

Thou that liftest life and duty upward into something
fair and great,

Honoring ever every virtue that will glorify the home
or State ;

Voice, that in heroic measure praisest love and noble
womankind,—

How at last the heart will triumph over all the splen-
dors of the mind ;

Telling, in the sailor-story, of a love outlasting all the
years,

With its pain and self-denial,—fathoming the well
of human tears ;

Singing faith, undying friendship, sorrow, and the
power of Christ to save,—

Molder of the grandest music ever uttered o'er a
lonely grave ;

Name by blameless language guarded, even as her
lofty chalk-white wall

Guards thine England, while around thee time's broad
billow thunders to its fall :—

Now that winter's breath is blowing and our day in
narrower circle runs,

And again the great Orion marching westward, belted
with his suns,

Warns, as with a voice that travels over roaring waste
and peopled lands,

That the birth of Christ is near us and the solemn
years are clasping hands,—

We salute thee, Laurel-wearer, dwelling in thy happy
Northern Isle,

We from out a newer England sundered thence by
many a rolling mile ;

We salute thee with an echo feebly drawn from thy
majestic line,

Whom the lords of life have dowered with the master-
gift we hold divine :

For thy voice doth "like a fountain" in the barren
world rise clear and strong,

Dear to English hearts, and ever dear to those who
cherish English song.

THE RETURN

And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

TENNYSON.

THE shadow far and wide ;
All sound hath died,
And Something felt but seen not from the shore,
Nor moved by any sail nor any oar,
Went outward with the tide.

No moaning of the bar ;
But far, oh, far
The silent ship has gone upon its way
Into the space that lies beyond our day,
Beyond our evening star.

Thence came it at our need ;
It bore a seed
From out the bosom of the Shadowy Sea,
Which grew, and filled the whole world gloriously
With flower of light indeed !

No sadness of farewell,
No voice, no bell,
The heart too full for aught but silence, when
The great soul turns to seek and find again
Its home where great souls dwell.

SONNETS

HESPERIDES

SINK, lovely day, and fold thy wings of gold
Around the islands of the western seas,
The far-off, beautiful Hesperides ;
For there the waves, by temperate winds controlled,
Sing to the shores forever. Sink and fold
Thy wings above their golden-fruited trees
And quiet gardens, and the sinless ease
Of them that grow no longer weak or old.
They that dwell there have borne life's little pain ;
They were as we are, but shall weep no more.
Fly, lovely day, and drop below the main
Where waits for me a welcome at the door.
I follow when the Boatman comes again,
Soon shall I hear his keel grate on the shore.

VENICE

ONLY a cloud,—far off it seemed to me
No habitable city,—when, behold,
Came gradual distinctions in the fold
Of tremulous vapor shadowing things to be ;
Forms whether of wave or air rose silently
O'er quiet lanes of water, caught the gold
Of the Italian sunset ; and thus rolled
The vail from off the Bride of the Blue Sea.
Alas, the irrecoverable dream !
Cathedral, palace, all things all too soon
Melted like faces in a troubled stream,
And, looking backward over the lagoon,
I saw the phantom city faintly gleam
As mist blown seaward underneath the moon.

FORO ROMANO

THE tide gone out : that long and passionate roar
Of life, once heard throughout the world, has
passed

With all its burdens far into the vast
And into silence to return no more.

We only see a pitiable store

Of stones, rent columns, crumbling walls, that last

A little longer,—outworn glories cast

Like wreckage on a melancholy shore.

And is this all? Did Rome herself withdraw

Forever too on that outgoing tide?

Lo, in the vision her own poet saw

Extending o'er the nations far and wide,

Rome is the mighty spirit of power and law

Filling the earth and destined to abide.

SPHINX

HER wings are folded in the plain that lies
Like a vast shield upturned to every star.

She sits as silent as God's mountains are,
Forever watching with calm solemn eyes
The white worlds in the shadow, as they rise
And pass in slow procession, and afar
Dip o'er the verge of the horizon's bar
Into the depths of unfamiliar skies.

So, ever by this lonely watcher's gaze
The race of men are filing with the rest,
Stars, systems, all : Whence, whither, lie their ways ?
Unto what other morning in the west ?
She asks with mute cold lips, but ne'er betrays
Her riddle, and no man has ever guessed.

TO WILLIAM WATSON

AFTER READING "THE PURPLE EAST"

ENGLAND is cold, thou sayest, and the frost
Has gathered thick and hard upon the land ;
In ears that hear, but do not understand,
A stricken people's death-cry seemeth lost.
Yet underneath, where roots are twined and crossed,
A great life throbs and climbs, by whose command
The nation some day with a mighty hand
Will right this wrong, nor fear the dreadful cost.
Voice of that better England, thou dost smite
The laggard conscience with a kingly rod ;
Prophet and poet in thy soul unite ;
And thy brave song, now vibrant far abroad,
Grows more and more attuned to truth and right
And all the awful harmonies of God.

MARS

AND who is this that comes with awful pace,
Red-handed like a slayer, and appears
To glare the fiercer for my sudden fears ?
Gradivus, worshiped in the land of Thrace !
The Strider, armed with battle-ax and mace,
Before whose step the cornfields sprout with spears,
And clouds for rain drop blood and women's tears
Till earth wears stains which heaven may scarce
efface.
'T is he that battled with a mighty hand
And led the hosts, when in their courses so
The stars fought Sisera ; he bears the brand
That levels noble cities, and his blow
Doth make a shudder run from land to land.
Thank God, his hour is passing ; let him go. .

THE SONNET

ART gave it us as Nature doth a shell :
It holds the murmurings of the infinite deep
Of mind and thought ; through its small arches
creep
The voices born about the sacred well ;
Here love and life their secret visions tell ;
And souls of old forgotten things that sweep
In music low along the shores of sleep,
Do haunt its chambers with some potent spell.
Whate'er the seas have whispered to the lands
A shell repeats ; this sings the heart's own lay.
But when I raised it dripping from the sands
To bear it to my cabinet, woe the day !
The tiny treasure brake within my hands,
And all the music fled from it away.

VIGILS

VIGILS

I

ONCE more the voice of time I hear
In that lone bell across the snow,
Twelve frosty echoes, blow on blow,
The "Ave ! Vale !" of the year.

Ah, God, how fleet the years go by,
Like ripples in a failing stream
That leap and sing, and flow and gleam,
Then pass, and leave the channel dry !

And, in the round our lives must keep,
How much to do, how little done !
We wake and toil from sun to sun,
From star to star we pause and sleep.

We sleep, we toil, but from the shore
The Deep at last recalls its wave ;
We spend the little span we have,
And then we sleep for evermore.

II

Nay, fling the window wide ; you wrong
Your birthright by so dark a doubt ;
You 'll find a larger air without
And wholesome thoughts and heaven's song.

There shines Orion, as of old,
With sword and belt of suns afar,
While at his feet the tiny star
We call our home lies dim and cold.

The glowing map of night reveals
Its circling orbs upon their way ;
The world is turning ; watch and pray ;
Hear music in the mighty wheels.

Let faith, fore-dreaming of the goal
That summons all the flying years,
Hear, round the vast mysterious spheres,
The outmost one forever roll,

The God-sphere, holding each in place,
So that the song rolls, and a jar
In earth or the remotest star
Can lend no discord, but a grace.

III

To toil and sleep — is that the whole ?
Is even all the boundless dark
Enough to quench the smallest spark ?
Can aught but sin o'erwhelm the soul ?

In part, by what we feel and see,
We know the Eternal Mind and Heart,
And we must learn, who know in part,
To trust Him for the things to be.

To Him who marks the sparrow's fall
Nothing is great, or small, or strange ;
Death has its hour, and life its change,
And runs the love of God through all.

Help us, O Lord, to bear Thy love :
Thy love is great : bend Thou our will
To Thy own law that guides us still
And guides the wandering lights above.

HYMN FOR THE CLOSING YEAR

O THOU who sealest up the past,
The days slip from us, and the years
Grow silent with their hopes and fears ;
'T is Thine to keep all things at last.

We have not done the things we would,
A blotted page we render back ;
And yet, whate'er our work may lack,
Thy work goes on, and Thou art good.

Thou movest in the moving years ;
Wherever man is, there Thou art,
To overrule his feebler part,
And bring a blessing out of tears.

We know what blessings had their birth
In Thy great purpose, and we see
What evil customs touched by Thee
Are moldering ruins in the earth.

Thy hand has been in every age,
To shape the ways of men, and teach

The generations, each to each,
To leave a nobler heritage.

I know the word is in Thy breath
That guides the wheels of time ; I know
'T is Thou that guidest them, although
They bear me toward the Vale of Death.

And as the silent seasons pass
Along their well appointed way,
Nor any hand is raised to stay
The falling sands, the emptying glass,

I own Thy promise, for I find
In all Thy dealings evermore
Thou teachest that the things before
Are better than the things behind.

A nobler lot awaits the soul
Than that of dying star and sun ;
Our lives do not in circles run,
But ever onward to a goal.

Thou, Opener of the years to be,
Let me not lose in woe or weal
The touch of that strong hand I feel
Upholding and directing me.

PATMOS

THE blue above immeasurably deep,
And blue around for many a shimmering mile,
Where sky and sea unbosom all they keep,
In open secret, to the lonely Isle,—
Yea, as of old, when Christ's Apostle came,
And saw, and heard — there all things are the same.

O Isle of Visions, shall there be again
The open vision ever? Are the days
So evil that among all living men
None may interpret now the light that strays
Still earthward through the thin and wavering screen —
None say, in rapt assurance, "I have seen"?

The cloud-built City,— built of all things rare,—
The many voices breaking on the shore,
The trumpets that run, blowing, down the air,—
These baffle our dull senses ; evermore
We look and listen, and remain unstirred,
• Waiting for some one who has seen and heard.

Perhaps he sleeps ; perhaps the dream is on
Of things that were, and are, and still shall be,—

Stars, swords, white horses, piercèd hands ; anon

The River and Tree of Life, and no more sea.

He will proclaim it, ere the age go quite,—

Our Poet, when the Angel whispers, “Write.”

For he will find in common sights and sounds —

More keen than we to listen and to look —

Outflowings from the vast eternal bounds,

And he shall write them in his own new book,

And be the prophet-poet of our choice,

O Island of the Vision and the Voice!

L' ENVOI

A HUNDRED buds into blossoms grew ;
The blight killed some ere the night wind blew ;
Some lingered and gained but an ill repute ;
One only came to the perfect fruit.

A hundred seeds from the branches fell ;
How many were lost I can not tell ;
Some throve for a while and were fair to see ;
One only grew to the perfect tree.

I flung to the air some songs of mine ;
And little I cared for the ninety and nine ;
I thought of the one that might descend
And flourish, perchance, in the heart of a friend.

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